



SAN FRANCISCO  
HISTORY CENTER



STACKS  
SAN FRANCISCO  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1223 90152 2020

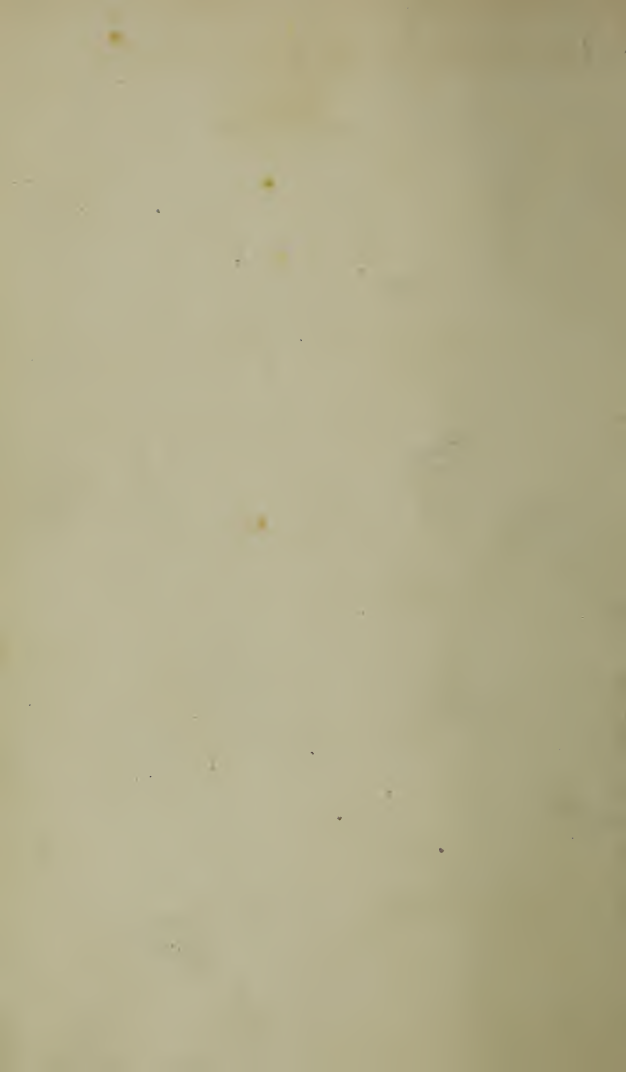
REFERENCE BOOK

*Not to be taken from the Library*

H. C. Clarke.



March 9  
D. F. Mason to Col. J.  
Gen. Scott  
Col. Washington



# INCIDENTS OF SHIPWRECK ;

OR THE

## Loss of the San Francisco,

BY

REV. W. H. COOPER, A.B.

LATE ACTING CHAPLAIN OF THE SHIP, ON A MISSION  
OF THE P. E. CHURCH TO RIO DE JANEIRO.



PHILADELPHIA:

WILLIS P. HAZARD, 178 CHESTNUT ST.

1855.

\* 910.4

C 78852

62 65

*Reference Dept.*  
SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

KITE & WALTON.



## P R E F A C E.

---

AT the request of several clerical and lay brethren, I prepared these notes for publication. Those who may favour them with a perusal, will find that they contain the substance, of what has already appeared in the *Episcópal Recorder* under my signature, and of sermons and addresses delivered by me, with reference to the horrible catastrophe, which occurred in connection with the *San Francisco*. Shortly after the publication of my letter in the *Recorder*, I was requested to draw up a statement more *in extenso*, with a view to preservation in a more substantial form than in the columns of a weekly periodical; but my professional duties have rendered the doing so an impossibility until now. I have hesitated to hand the manuscript to my publisher, fearing, lest, at this distance of time, the public interest in a once all-absorbing topic should have so far died away as to

render the present publication supererogatory. But it has been represented to me that there are numbers whom it is desirable to reach, who probably never read the letter in the *Recorder*, and to whom the melancholy details of the shipwreck, might now be rendered accessible if published in the form of a small volume. It is but right also that some such permanent record of those transactions should remain behind—that the great moral lesson taught by so severe a visitation of Divine Providence might not be altogether lost. It is with these views, that I now desire to pass the following sheets through the press: and I pray God that he will vouchsafe to bless to others the perusal of the narrative of “Incidents,” which, although distressing in themselves, may, I trust, be remembered with profit by those who were the subjects of them to the latest period of their lives.

PHILADELPHIA, SEPTEMBER, 1854.

# CONTENTS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### THE PREPARATION.

Steamship *San Francisco*. My appointment as missionary.  
Sudden change from quiet parish. Difficulties in the  
way of procuring passage. Delay. All ready, . 9

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DEPARTURE.

A dreary day. Suffering from cold. Longing for a storm.  
Singular detention. Lieut. Col. Washington. Diseased  
passengers. Salute. False hopes, . . . 12

## CHAPTER III.

### THE VOYAGE.

Change of temperature. Bright hope and cheerful con-  
versation. Christmas sermon. Majors Gates and Stock-  
well. Reflections, . . . . . 16

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE GALE.

"An appointed time." Mr. Tenny. Captain Gardiner. Confusion and dismay. Commencement of the storm. The Ship's "guards." Baggage thrown overboard. "The Leak." Boy who would not steal. Lying unjustifiable. The saloon. An awful night. Hazardous position of my children. Their removal. Exposed condition of the soldiery. Coloured waiter. Children asleep. Removal to the cabin. Reflections, . 19

## CHAPTER V.

## THE DISASTER.

Solemn act of prayer. Sneering at the Clergy when on board ship. We may "magnify" our "office." Comfort in prayer. God a refuge. Truthfulness in religion. The only solace in time of danger. Awful condition of the unreconciled. Horrible profanity. A man and a hog. A word of warning. Justice to the living demands that we should speak the truth. Desperate cases require desperate remedies. A solemn thing to die. The reconciled in Christ. Helpless condition of the ship. Prayer. Comfort in doctrine of an overruling Providence. The fatal Sea. Death and destruction on every side. Despair and agony. Nearly two hundred souls swept overboard. Not *hopeless* even then. Agony of the self-condemned. The briny inundation. My children almost downed under the feet of frantic persons. A little babe. A bleeding child. Preparation for death. Scene on deck. Reflections on Popery. A pandemonium, . . . . . 28

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE CHRISTMAS.

A forlorn company. The wounded and disabled. The first Communion. A sad Christmas. Prevailing efficacy of prayer. Immanuel. Music. The morning Hymn. Value of the liturgy. Reflections on Forms of Prayer. Quasi suffocation. Bible and Prayer Book. The "Napoleon" and the "Maria Freeman." Distressed woman. Profanity of the soldiery. Recklessness. Bad example of many officers. Searching question. Boots and valuables purloined. Tantalizing sufferings from thirst. Thirteen gales. Bending a sail. A Sailor lost,

47

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE TRANS-SHIPMENT.

The Barque *Kilby*. Noble conduct of Captain Lowe. Gratitude to God. Prospect of escape. Commendatory prayer. A fearful descent. Improper management of the disembarcation. Gross partiality in favour of the military. Injustice to civilians. The lot. Right of the strong arm. The *Kilby chartered*, . . . 61

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE "KILBY."

Threatened accident. A child's description. Thankfulness for deliverance. Contrast. Night quarters. Military superiority and usurpation. Bribery. A crowded cabin. Dreary prospect. Another gale. Horrible

anticipation. Shortness of supplies. Trust in God. Selfishness. Ejection of civilian passengers. Gallantry a thing for fine weather, and a time of prosperity. Preserved milk. Interposition of Providence. Starvation. Small rations. A day of rejoicing. Horrible anticipations. Famishing children. Sufferings in the hold of the Kilby. A cup of cold water. A disappointment. A noble heart. Consolations of Religion. Profanity of a woman. Army Chaplains. A Sermon. The Bible, and the Lord's Prayer, . . . . 68

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE LUCY THOMSON.

Hope deferred maketh the heart sick. Value of prayer. A marked Providence. Second trans-shipment in an angry sea. Kind treatment by Captain Pendleton and his officer. Entrance into New York, . . . 93

## CHAPTER X.

### THE MORAL AND CONCLUSION.

Change of apparel. Contrast in circumstances. Encouragement to Ministers. Thanksgiving Service badly managed. Gratitude. An important inquiry. Reflections. Mr. Stockwell and others. Parting advice to soldiers and sailors. Conclusion, . . . 97

# INCIDENTS OF SHIPWRECK.

---

## \*CHAPTER I.

### THE PREPARATION.

We sigh to think how soon we part  
From scenes our childhood loved,  
And strange forebodings fill the heart,  
As with some friend beloved  
We wander thoughtfully and sad,  
Where oft we roamed before,  
And weep o'er things that made us glad,  
In sunny days of yore.

THE Steamship "*San Francisco*," was a vessel of the first class. She was estimated to burthen over two thousand tons. Built with extraordinary care—so we understood—new from the stocks, the voyage to California, of which, in this narrative I propose to speak, was to have been her first. The

\* For the Stanzas at the head of each Chapter, I am indebted to the kindness of Miss Harriet L. Castle, of Germantown.

Foreign Committee of the Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church having resolved to establish a Mission at Rio Janeiro, I was solicited to undertake that work. Little imagining what then lay before me—aye! well is it that we know not what is in the future—I consented to embark, for this purpose, in the *San Francisco*, which, it was then expected, would be ready to sail for the Brazilian Capital within a week. As a matter of course, I was greatly hurried in my preparation for departure. The three eldest of my children were to be sent to Massachusetts, and there placed under proper guardianship preparatory to attending school. Farewell sermons had to be delivered to, and leave taken of, kind and attached parishioners. Furniture required to be disposed of, housekeeping to be broken up, a library packed, and all things made ready for my departure with Mrs. Cooper and four of our little ones—little ones, indeed, for the oldest of them was not more than eight years of age. Within, not more, I think, than the compass of one short week all this was hastily attended to; and we found ourselves in the “Empire City,” awaiting the moment when we should be summoned to bid adieu to the land of Washington for, as we then thought, some years at least.

The ship had been chartered by the Federal Government for the conveyance of troops to California. Considerable difficulty arose, in consequence, in the



way of my obtaining a passage to South America. An official appointment as temporary Chaplain to the troops was at one time proposed ; but, as two other clergymen had also applied for permission to go out, this idea was relinquished. It was finally understood that, as the *San Francisco* was owned by Episcopalians, I should act whilst on board, in the capacity of the captain's or ship's Chaplain : an arrangement which appeared to be perfectly satisfactory to all parties. Neither of the other clergymen, however, having actually embarked with us, I thus found myself, when at sea, the only Minister of Religion on board.

The military were on hand ready for embarkation : but, to our surprise, day after day passed away, and still the *San Francisco* was not ready. Her machinery, or rather, the condenser would not work. The engines were said to be of new and improved construction ; but trial after trial failed ; and so some three weeks beyond the period originally named passed away, and still we had not left New York. At length, part of the ineffective apparatus having been removed, and its place supplied, as I understood, by an air pump adapted to the remainder, all was reported in order ; and we were accordingly notified to prepare for sea.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE DEPARTURE.

Kindred, and country, friends and home,  
We leave them for another land,  
Over the changing sea to roam  
A hopeful, cheerful, happy band.

THE twenty-first of December, 1853, was a wintry day. The Banks of the Hudson were clad with snow: and we felt miserably enough. The *San Francisco* lay at anchor in the stream, beautiful in her fair proportions—yet a perfect mammoth—a huge marine monster of her kind. Small idea had we of the catastrophe so soon to occur on board! After some delay the passengers were conveyed alongside in a small tug; and soon the ship got up steam, weighed anchor, and proceeded slowly down the harbour, (of which we *thought* we were about to take leave for years.) In less than one short month we—that is, those of us who survived to tell the tale—were back again, shipwrecked, forlorn, and destitute:—friendless I was about to add, but oh! not so; for deeper sympathy in wretchedness than that manifested towards us by the generous Christians of New York, it were impossible to express. It was *substantial* sympathy; *practical* philanthropy; *genuine* Christianity. Nothing was by them left undone

which in reason ought to have been done, in order to alleviate the effect of our sufferings, and repair our losses. The good Lord remember them for this!

I have written that word “destitute:”—let it stand. But I must add that it has reference only to the *outer man*. True, we were deprived of all, or very nearly all, the majority of us possessed on earth, by the visitation of Him who doeth all things well, yet was the love of God in Christ manifested to us in various ways, so forcibly, so emphatically, in so marked a manner, that it would be, in us, ingratitude of the deepest dye to murmur or repine. If we lost our all of this world’s wealth, what is *that*, in comparison with the *treasure in heaven* which God designed that we should thus acquire? Nor were we friendless: for in the very depths of our affliction, we were graciously permitted—for myself, and I trust, for others also, I may be allowed to say this,—to experience in our inmost heart, the blessedness of vital union with that dear Friend who sticketh closer than a brother; who as the Captain of our salvation, himself being made perfect through suffering, ever sympathises in our afflictions.

But to return. Our troubles, it may be said, commenced from the very moment of our setting foot on board. I have remarked that the embarkation took place on a raw, dreary, December day. During the remainder of that day, and throughout the whole of Wednesday night, we were very cold. Few of us could

sleep when in our berths. Every one complained : our only comfort in present misery being the prospect of soon reaching a warmer latitude than that of *Sandy Hook*. To my surprise, Capt. Watkins observed to me as the ship glided slowly along, that he would rejoice in a N. W. snow storm. What ! said I—you are the first man whom I ever heard wish for storm. He explained that he was fearful of a S. E. gale. Soon, alas ! we had storm enough, and from the quarter he desired. Is it not better always to leave such things in JEHOVAH'S hands, and say *Thy will, O Father, be done on earth as it is in heaven !*

The only fire accessible to the passengers was that contained in a little stove which stood in the saloon. There we crowded together, little dreaming of the misery, the theatre of which that place was so soon to be. We endeavoured to get warm by turns : but the wind blew piercingly cold ; and it was not until after the second night on board that the blood began to course freely in our veins. An officer and his lady who had not embarked, were the cause of our detention until the morrow : and, sad to relate, they both were lost ! As we proceeded down the harbour, a small steamer crowded with soldiers, neared the San Francisco, but not for sometime afterwards could she discharge her living freight. The men were packed together upon her deck. I felt sad, and pitied the poor fellows seeing them so exposed :—but what was *that*, in

comparison with what soon became their lot? LIEUT. COL. WASHINGTON—the hero of Buena Vista, to whom I had been introduced by Gen. Scott, came off amongst that party, a robust, soldier-like, and noble looking man. In less than three days afterwards, he too, had found a grave in the raging sea! His vacant place has, no doubt, been supplied e're now, as *ours* will be when *we* shall have passed away. So it is with this changing world! Well for those whose affections are set on things above—whose life is hid with Christ in God.

On Thursday morning all being now on board, including *measly* passengers and those who had come from amongst small pox patients, too, as I suspected at the time, the ship passed out of port under “easy steam.” A salute of several guns was fired from a fort below—perhaps by men who would have willingly been our companions *then*. Thankful they ought to be to God that it was not so. Oh! is it not better to be content to leave it to HIM to guide us? “*I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*”\* In return, the steamer gracefully dipped her flag: so ended our transactions with the shore; and now lay before us “the sea—the open sea.”

Oh, what an emblem that wide waste of water is of

\* Jer. x. 23.

the ocean of human life ! We embark upon it with hearts elated, and spirits buoyant ; our prospects cheering, and we, the while, anticipating nor sorrow nor misfortune. For a time we career gaily along. But storms arise : the treacherous deep then proves itself to be but a slight dependence in weal or woe. Soon, however, is the bark of human hopes—in how many cases is it not actually so ?\*—liable to founder amid the waves, or to be dashed to pieces amongst the rocks ! Well is it for those who build upon the ROCK OF AGES, and place in the *Eternal God* their trust. Underneath *them* will be the everlasting arms :—in *him* the tempest-tossed and afflicted soul will assuredly find rest.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE VOYAGE.

Hopefully, joyfully,  
We dance o'er the ocean,  
Feeling a soothing joy,  
In its wild motion.

FRIDAY morning dawned : and then came a change of temperature, so that in the neighbourhood of that

\* Upwards of 200 vessels, are reported annually to disappear, of which no tidings are received.



*Gulf stream*, the very mention of which we afterwards learnt to regard, and which we shall ever remember, with so much horror, we at last began to *thaw*. And then we conversed of bright and happy days in prospect. We talked of how we should spend the time on board; of the probable length of the voyage out, and of much else besides. We spake, too, of "merry Christmas" so near at hand, and I was thinking of the Sermon I should on that day preach to my new-found congregation. God had a Sermon to preach to us all ere then. But ah! me; I fear that he was not sufficiently, perhaps, in all our thoughts:—that we spake too much of the things of time, and too little of that Eternity to which many of us were—like the arrow's passage through the air—so rapidly hastening. Every heart seemed hopeful. Never, probably, were a party, similarly situated, more comfortable or more happy than we felt ourselves to be as that day dawned. The cares and disagreeablenesses necessarily attendant upon embarkation for a foreign land were over; and the pain of separation from dear friends had begun to pass away. The atmosphere, till now harsh and chill, had become mild and genial. Our splendid ship, furnished brimful, I might almost say, with every necessary and every delicacy which heart could wish for on a voyage of many thousand miles;—our noble Commodore and his not less noble second in command whose sea-beat countenances were seldom seen

by their passengers without a smile—all appeared to augur favourably for our prospect, when soon—aye! how soon—the whole was changed. Our joy was to be turned into mourning; that elaborately gilded, and magnificently appointed ship, was to become the scene of grief and wretchedness—of want and woe! Many a heart which on that Friday morn, beat ardently with hope, was to become cold in death; the fierce, howling winds their requiem—the deep, dark, blue ocean their only pillow. Such the instability of earthly happiness; such the uncertainty of human life! My God! so teach me, indeed, to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom. As I walked the deck—and a noble promenade it was—occasionally taking a turn with *Mr. Gates* or *Mr. Stockwell*, how little did they, or I, imagine that a few short hours would find their corpses tossed upon the deep; and myself a sufferer deprived of all or nearly all I owned in the world—my life the while, and the lives of my wife and little ones, almost miraculously preserved by a special intervention—if I might presume to think so—of that God whose all-wise PROVIDENCE ordereth all things both in heaven and in earth. Oh, who can tell what a day may bring forth! We think ourselves far-sighted. What know we of the future? Is not God unsearchable; and his ways, are they not past finding out? Onwards we went. Well did the good ship plough the main. The ocean was before, the land several



hundred miles behind us; and all seemed well. None thought that danger was so near at hand. My soul longs for the hour when, this life's voyage over, I shall be at rest. Blessed Jesus! wash the souls of all who read this page in the sin-cleansing, and sin-healing fountain of thy most precious blood. Embarked on life's stormy sea, be thou our pilot to guide us safely into the haven of eternal rest.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE GALE.

The winter wind mournfully whistles around us,  
Dirge like and slowly it peals forth its wrath,  
While the half smothered roar of the waves that surround us,  
Keeps time to the monotoned song of the north.

THE writer's state-room was in the saloon immediately opposite those occupied by Mr. Stockwell, and by Mr. Tenny the Captain's clerk, both of whom were drowned. Poor young men! Some would speak of their *untimely fate*. But is not such language unbecoming those who believe that all things are in God's hands? *Is there not an appointed time to' man upon earth?\** Stockwell, whose acquaintance I had made just as we were leaving New York,

\* Job, vii. 1.

sailed contrary to his mother's wish, but believing himself to be in the path of duty. Tenny appears to have only graduated the year before at Cambridge University. After the wreck disaster, a book was found belonging to him, which contained the portraits of his class-mates:—sad souvenir! short was his dream of life. Oh, that the young men of our day could be brought, by these events, instead of following wicked practices, as too many do, to *Remember their Creator in the days of their youth.*\* I fear that the youth of this land of freedom are far from being, in general, what they ought to be. Liberty is degenerating into licentiousness. Well might it be for such if they would ponder those solemn words of the wise man: *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*† It is fearful to see the irreligion which pervade all classes of society, but especially the younger portion. May God, of his mercy, revive religion in our midst!

Captain Gardiner's state-room was next but one to mine. Whilst conversing with his servant the sea swept them both away:—the domestic was drowned, whilst his master, crippled by rheumatism, was intercepted by the debris of the wreck and saved!

\* Ecc. xii. 1.

† Ecc. xi. 9.

Colonel Washington occupied the room beyond. I saw nothing of him during the gale. Early in the evening we retired to rest, but, the storm which commenced in the afternoon, and had by this time, lashed itself into fury, prevented sleep. Few of us slept that night; and ere another came, many of our party had slept their last.

Finding repose impossible, I arose and dressed. It was then about ten or half past ten o'clock. Few thought of clocks or watches then. Mine was beneath my pillow when the state-rooms were swept away. The saloon was, at that time, in a state of sad confusion. A group of officers—some kept their last “guard” then—sat around the stove, ruminating upon our deplorable condition. Scarce any expected to survive:—*two* indeed, of that party perished. I shall never forget that group. Soldiers were they, and brave:—yet they cowered before the storm. Upon the battle-field man can contend with man for life, and he may possibly escape. But here upon the angry sea, he could not contend with *God*; and little was there indeed which he could do for life. Their heads were bowed in anguish, and their thoughts were thoughts of death. Melancholy circumstances, were these in which to make acquaintance, but so it was:—I then spake to some, words of comfort, for the first, and the last time. The winds howled fearfully:—the remembrance of its “*soughing*” sound, as it rushed through an aperture in my

apartment, I shall bear with me to the grave. The regimental desks were overthrown; and the books scattered here and there. *The officers who kept them will write no more.* The ship laboured heavily—so much so, indeed, as to induce the fear that she must founder, or go to pieces. There were folding doors on either side of the saloon. These communicated with those fatal “guards” of which I spake to a friend, previously to our departure, with much distrust, knowing them, to be unfit for an ocean-going vessel. With such appendages no ship should ever be permitted to attempt an Atlantic passage. Acting as a powerful lever, one of three consequences must follow in a violent gale. Either the ship must be overturned, the deck with the upper works be forced off, or the guards give way. Fortunately for us, the latter was what occurred:—otherwise not one would have remained to tell the tale.

About midnight orders were given to throw overboard, with a view to lighten ship, a quantity of large military cases which encumbered the after-deck. Whilst this was doing, a soldier, seeing me at the stern window of the saloon, ominously inquired, “*where is the leak?*” My heart sank within me, as the truth then flashed upon my mind. And is it come, O God! I thought, to this? Here, in this awful sea, at the midnight hour, amid storm, and darkness so thick that it may be almost felt, are we

about to sink and perish without relief? "*Spare us good Lord!*" and I scarce dared hope they could be answered, as I *thought*, not even daring to articulate, the words. The ship *was* leaking—fearfully leaking at the time;—and yet it was denied, lest the passengers should be affrighted. What can justify a falsehood? Is it lawful to do evil that good may come? If it is, let us know it, and by whose authority. We are told of a little boy *who suffered death*, in this our country, rather than take that which was not his. And did not the same God who said *thou shalt not steal*, command us also to *speake every man the truth to his neighbour*.<sup>\*</sup> And what must be *his* fate who, ignoring this command of the Creator, even though it be with a kind intent, shall die with a *lie* upon his tongue? This practice of speaking falsely to persons in danger, is, indeed, too common, both by land and sea:—at the sick bed, and elsewhere; and in this way—from misplaced kindness—is many a poor victim most cruelly deceived, given to hope, when there is in reality no hope—and thus led onwards, unconsciously, to the very jaws of death, in many a case, it is to be feared, to the great peril of the soul. How can men be expected to prepare for an emergency, if its existence be concealed from them? Let the truth be spoken, then; or if it may not, we can, at the least, "keep silence before God."

\* Zech. viii. 16.

None can conceive of the horrors of that night of woe. There was emphatically, "sorrow upon the sea." We were tossed like a basket upon the waves. The doors already mentioned were slightly made, and as slightly fastened. They were in consequence, continually forced open by the wind; thus exposing to view, amid the deep darkness of the night, the roaring waves, which, within a few feet, seemed threatening each moment to engulf us. Let my readers endeavour to imagine what that apartment must have been whilst thus exposed. From the saloon you could, through the open door, behold the sea on either side. Protection there appeared to be none. In vain we endeavoured to keep close the doors. Whilst attempting, with others, to perform this service, I was violently hurled against a stud; this snapped asunder, and I fell down to leeward slightly hurt. At this time a dread anxiety was depicted on every countenance; and there was fear in every heart.

In that portion of the main deck which formed the floor of the saloon there was an oblong aperture of some twenty feet in length by three in breadth. This was enclosed by a beautifully ornamented cast iron railing which swayed to and fro as though it were only wicker work. On seeing this I became for the first time convinced that we were in fearful danger. But, unwilling to alarm, I scarce dared venture to speak my fears. Indeed, for one remark,



somewhat incautiously expressed, in answer to an observation by one of the group already mentioned, I received a sharp rebuff. "You," said my remonstrant, "should remember that, although you have been at sea before, there are others on board who have not"—alluding to the inmates of the adjoining state-rooms. Perhaps had *they* been alarmed yet more than my few words were calculated to alarm, they might have gone down below, and been saved as well as we? One lesson I have learnt by this: and that is, if I shall ever again be placed in God's providence, in similar circumstances, to speak unhesitatingly *what I shall myself see fit*.

Three of our children lay fast asleep in a state-room adjoining that which was occupied by Mrs. Cooper and myself. The door of the former, however, opened upon the "guards." Our nursery maid\* cried out that the sea was beating in upon them; and so it was, for the window had slipped down, exposing them to the dashing spray. I went immediately to their relief; and in doing so, of necessity, passed through what had been the soldiers' quarters for the night. I had occasionally heard their cries, as the sea washed in upon them in their beds. There was nothing to protect them but the bulwarks and canvass screen:—but my horror may be imagined on finding that portions of the ship had

\* Poor girl! when the sea struck the ship she left us to seek her friends, and I never saw her more.

been swept away, and the deck had been started up. And upon this deck, with literally a plank only between them and the ocean, scores of human beings had been placed to sleep, whilst the hull was filled with stores and baggage! As I passed to and fro, with every roll of the ship the spray, thick as from a water wheel, dashed upwards into my face, whilst the sea roared furiously amid the darkness of the night. I found no time was to be lost, and taking with me a coloured waiter (poor fellow he, too, perished in the storm!) some of the planks meanwhile, as it seemed, afloat beneath my feet, I transferred the children, one by one, in my arms, to my own state-room which was entered from the saloon. No sooner were they there—dear innocents! than they fell fast asleep again. Who could not wish, sometimes, to be a child!

Leaving them I removed my wife, clad only in her night clothes, with my dressing gown thrown over, to the lower cabin, where a party of ladies now greatly alarmed, had congregated. The gale had continued to increase—aye! many a poor mariner of other ships we have since ascertained, was *then* passing to his account:—the wind moaned awfully through doors and windows. I shall never forget those sounds. Methinks I can hear them now! Three several times, too anxious to rest anywhere, I ascended to my state-room, and, unwilling to awake the sleeping children, as though



infatuated, lay down as often in the bed which had been vacated by my wife. Oh, was not my position then like that of him of whom the wise man speaks —“*as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of the mast?*”\* So do wicked men sleep on in the midst of sin, little thinking of the deep abyss yawning beneath their feet; and into which, at death, they are so soon to plunge. Oh, let us all take warning by the fate of those to whom that night was their last on earth! But I pass on. At length, perceiving something ominous in the demeanor of Lieutenant Murray, U. S. N., I yielded to the entreaties of my wife, and consented to awake and remove the children, for greater safety, to the cabin below. Fearful were we of some strange, indefinite, impending danger, none knew exactly what. Three or four hours later, and it would have been *too late*. So, many a soul is warned to flee from sin, and take refuge in the arms of Christ:—so, many a hardened one is entreated to avoid the wrath to come, by accepting the love of Jesus; but, *he will not*:—destruction comes upon him; and his soul is lost:—IT IS THEN TOO LATE!

\* Prov. xxiii. 34.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE DISASTER.

Still howls the wind in its pitiless wrath,  
Still rush the waves from its conquering path ;  
The rain pours in torrents on each stricken head,  
And mingles its din with the wail o'er the dead.

THIS done, we engaged in solemn prayer to Almighty God. It is not my purpose now to speak of my own feelings and occupation during that awful night, further than it may, with the Divine blessing, subserve the interest of religion. That prayer I remark, therefore, *was not volunteered by me*. I know it is too much the fashion for thoughtless men to speak, in terms contemptuous, of clergymen at sea. Well may such witticisms be spared as are sometimes indulged. It *may* do whilst things are bright, cheering, and prosperous;—it may do whilst danger is distant and all is well, to say that it is “unlucky” to have a minister of Christ on board the ship;—but, let me say to such that, if storm and tempest come, those who indulge in such remarks will have but small desire to use them *then*. At such a time, with what coward trembling does the hitherto reckless man, the bold despiser of religion, seek and entreat the supplications of the ambassador of the cross ! It may be jeeringly said to be unlucky to have such a man on board, whilst there is naught to fear ; but let the ship be about

to founder, and let there be reason to dread lest her living freight should suddenly meet a watery grave; and *then* will the boldest suspend his mockery; and the most hardened repress the irreverent jest:—then will the impenitent sinner, and the careless person, be made to feel that, far from being a *calamity*, it is indeed a privilege of the highest order to be enabled to fall back upon the consolation, and to seek the prayer, of even the humblest of Jehovah's ministering servants! \* Those there were on board the *San Francisco* who did not scruple to confess that the presence of the Lord's unworthy servant in the hour of their extremity, was felt to be amongst the greatest blessings they were permitted to enjoy.

I have stated that we engaged in prayer to God. Let men say what they will, it is a comfort for us to know that *He* is always near. If any prayerless one read this, I would entreat him to remember that a day *may* come when he shall not even have time to pray: and that, in the words of Solomon, "*where the tree falleth there it shall be.*" † Yes! one who has experienced it in his inmost soul desires to record here his emphatic testimony to the value of prayer. Let fools scoff as they please, there lives one who tells them that, with the earth fading from view, and all the horrors of death in prospect, on board that apparently sinking ship, it *was* a comfort

\* With Paul, let it for once be permitted me to magnify mine office and to say that, (*supra.*)

† Ecc. xi. 3.

to feel, in that hour of sorrow, that the ETERNAL GOD is indeed a refuge—that *Christ* is indeed a friend who sticketh closer than a brother. Oh, that my words could, through the influence of the Divine Spirit, reach the hearts of sceptics and unbelievers as I here declare my solemn conviction that there is a reality in religion—that there is a truthfulness in the declaration of the word of God:—that the Gospel of the blessed Jesus is no cunningly devised fable:—no deception practised by interested impostors upon the ignorant and unwary; but, on the contrary, a serious and solemn truth—a truth which concerns most deeply our never-dying souls—a truth which all men to whom it is delivered must experience and confess who would know real happiness on earth, or reign with Christ in heaven. In writing thus we are not “mad,” but “speak forth,” with Paul, “the words of truth and soberness.” “We speak that which we do *know*, and testify of that which we have seen;” and therefore are convinced that an interest in Christ and his great salvation, obtained through faith in his precious blood is that which can alone bring substantial comfort to the heart, and infuse an inward peace into the soul, in the hour of danger and in the prospect of dissolution. When flesh and heart are beginning to faint and fail, blessed indeed is it to feel that GOD is the strength of our heart and our portion for ever. This truth it was,—may all who read these pages experience it in *their* hearts also!—this truth alone it

was, by which we were sustained and strengthened;—enabled to endure, without sinking under them, the horrors of that time.

And now what shall we say of the state of the Christless soul—of him who is estranged from God, having no part in the Covenant, and about to die without hope? Aye! what shall we say of such? Awful indeed at all times is the condition of the unreconciled, for God is angry with the sinner every day, and we know not what a day may bring forth—but tremendously awful it must be in the moment of death. We would write and speak in charity; but, *there is a charity to the souls of the living* which demands that we should speak *the truth*. This compels me to declare, as I shall specify hereafter, that I witnessed several most appalling cases of irreligion on board that ship which had well nigh proved my grave. Men were swept into eternity, or I have been ill-informed, whilst in a state of besotted drunkenness; and others are reported to have perished, the words of profanity and wickedness yet upon their tongue. Of their departed comrades—horrible to relate—the survivors spake as of those who had gone to—perdition! This I relate here, not to disturb the dead who are beyond the reach of word from me, but, as knowing the terrors of the Lord, and seeking, therefore, to persuade men. Let one awful case suffice to substantiate this point. After the decks were swept, a man and a hog were seen falling overboard at the same moment, and the fer-

mer was heard to say that, if he could but seize the swine, he would—*ride upon him into hell !!* Both, my informant says, perished together. The brute met the end of brutes ! whilst the man, if God's word be true, must have passed through the ocean of waters into the *Burning Lake*.

Can it, then, be thought presumptuous, or uncharitable, in him who indites these pages, to uplift the warning voice ?—to say to those whose sins are unrepented of ; who are leading lives of folly ; whose consciences testify that they are far from God, uninterested in Christ, and unsanctified by his Spirit ; that they are treasuring up for themselves moments of anguish which, to their cost they will one day find to be most awful ? When the wicked man dies, the soul shudders at the contemplation of his fate. I plead guilty to a want of sympathy with that mawkish sentimentalism, that spurious charity, which sends every soul, at death, whether sanctified or not, into the mansions of bliss in heaven. Nay, I go further, I believe that circumstances sometimes arise when it becomes sinful in us to observe silence. When notorious transgressors perish we may not pronounce judgment, it is true ! we may not assume the province of Omnipotence : but, *justice to the living*, imperatively requires that we should, when such deaths occur, unscrupulously declare the fate of impenitent sinners, lest others, also, should come into their place of torment. I feel confident that, were



such the course adopted more generally by the Christian world, far less of evil would occur to the souls of the living than any amount of injury which could possibly be thus inflicted upon the departed dead.

The surgeon who amputates a limb diseased, is a kinder man, by far, than he who, to preserve the member would hopelessly peril life. Desperate cases require desperate remedies! and so the sinner must be admonished to take warning by the fate of those who have perished in their sins. We know that there *must* come an end of life! so, consequently, must, with it, come an end of sinning: but there will be the retribution. *It is appointed unto men once to die*—writes an inspired apostle—*but after this the judgment.* Heb. ix. 27. Men may if they will, for we are undoubtedly free agents! men may, at their pleasure, swear, and blaspheme, and commit iniquity; but *they will do so at their peril*. All such doings must, sooner or later, come to a close; the hour of death must inevitably arrive, as well to the servant of Satan, as to the servant of God; and then, the penalty for such things is, THE CONDEMNATION OF THE SOUL! The pen of inspiration has recorded it; THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH!

It is a solemn thing to die. We felt it on board that ship. Aye! it is no trifling matter to confront Death. Some of our companions were swept away in God's inscrutable wisdom;—they now sleep their last sleep unshrouded, and uncoffined, amid the

ocean's billows—and *I* am writing here ! The strong man and the tender woman were swept away almost by my side ; the sea was covered with struggling mortals one instant, the next, the salt brine choked their speech, and the last Enemy proved victorious. Two who were saved told us what it is to drown, for they endured all but death itself, whilst in the sea and clinging to the wreck. And we too, all of us, suffered mentally the fearful agonies of a sudden death. May I not, then, write—having stood, as it were, upon the very borders of the tomb—that it is a solemn thing to die ? This must be the case under any circumstances, but more solemn still by far it must be *to die unprepared*. To be suddenly cut off—the warm life's blood coursing freely through the veins,—is no small matter even to those who can humbly trust that, through the blood of Jesus their peace is made with God : but it must be an awful thing—a calamity most horrible—to stand upon the confines of Eternity—to look into an open grave—and yet to know and feel that our sins are unrepented of and therefore unforgiven. Some men meet death with all the stolid indifference of desperation ! others whilst suffering the terrible agonies of a remorseful conscience. May God of his mercy cause the unconverted to lay these things to heart !

How different are the hopes and feelings of the reconciled in Christ ! They know that if their earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, they have a



building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Encircled by the clouds of affliction—passing through the dark valley of the shadow of death, they need fear no evil; his rod and staff they comfort them. The smile of Jesus can penetrate deeper than Egyptian darkness! he beckons towards the mansions which the Father hath prepared for those who love him. The hope which dwells within the breast of a true Christian may not be bartered for a thousand worlds. What compensation can be offered, in exchange, for the privilege of joy and peace in believing, to him who has tasted that the Lord is gracious? What will this world be to us—its pomps and pleasures, its wicked pursuits, its lying deceits, in the solemn hour of death? *Then* will they fade away as do the stars on the rising of the morning's sun. From the eternal world we shall look back upon this earthly scene, astonished that we could have been content so long to linger and grovel here. But we proceed with our narrative.

The machinery had ceased to work. The foremast, with yards and sails, had "gone by the board," and the rudder chains were parted. The ship lay, therefore, in the trough of the sea! and we were utterly helpless. Wave after wave continued to break over us, and all hope in MAN was gone. In this condition, I felt that the time had arrived to lay aside reserve; and at the request of a young man who sat wrapped in silent meditation and subsequently declared to me his inten-

tion of devoting himself to the cause of Christ in the ministry of his Church—a resolution, I trust, he has not forgotten—we again commended our souls to God. I was not hopeless, however, even then. In conversation with a pious friend, since gone to his rest after many wanderings, and with whom, it was indeed a pleasure to interchange thoughts at such a time, I was enabled to express the conviction that since God, if we rightly understood his previous Providences—as men of faith had prayerfully sought to understand them—had given his servant work to do in a certain portion of the vineyard, I should be spared to do it. Mistaken or not, this thought comforted me; nor as he subsequently assured me was it lost upon my friend. Whatever might be said of our point of destination, I have no doubt, as was suggested by others at the time, that there was a post of duty *there*. I was not there of my own will; I had not sought the dangers of the sea; but left my quiet parish in obedience to what appeared to be, on calm consideration, a call from God. And I can now thank Him, as I did in the very midst of all our sufferings, that he deigned to put such honour upon my ministry as to constitute me the official medium of spiritual comfort and consolation to those afflicted souls. Had I sailed in one of two or three other ships in contemplation, that people would have been left like sheep without a shepherd; for unhappily our rulers do not feel bound to provide spiritual instructors for those whom they send

abroad. Before leaving New York it was expected, as already intimated, that two other clergymen were to embark with us, but *God* knew that it was not so to be. *His ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts.* I stood alone, surrounded by most awful and trying circumstances, in the midst of more than seven hundred souls, the only accredited Ambassador for Christ; and, as such, bound to minister to others, whilst I myself stood much in need of the ministry of consolation. *That* was a mission such as few have been called to set forth upon; and from which the stoutest heart might shrink, were the future unconcealed. It was truly a mission of exalted privilege—one big with blessings.

The solemn exercise of prayer had calmed our spirits; and we felt, in consequence, I trust, somewhat the more resigned to the Divine will concerning us. Some twenty or thirty of our party had deserted their state-rooms, and were stretched upon mattresses in a corner of the cabin. There we mused upon our sad prospects; each one, no doubt, thinking of that account which all expected so soon to be called upon to give. My wife lay with her infant in her arms, and I with another dear one in mine upon the floor, when there came a fearful crash, an awful sea; it was a perfect avalanche, carrying with it, as it swept over us, all the state-rooms in the saloon above (I retain, as a sad memento, the key of one of mine) with their living inmates, numbering, it is thought, from one hundred

and fifty to one hundred and eighty souls, and breaking in the deck above our heads only a few feet from where we lay. Of the scene which followed it were vain to attempt a description. It was the most appalling sight I ever beheld. May I not, nor any one—ever witness another such! I had heard and read of such things before; but here was *the living reality* present to my eyes, and of *that* can no adequate sketch be given. The shrieks and cries of frantic women as they rushed to and fro, are still ringing in my ears. Time suffices not to obliterate the remembrance of them. The despairing countenances of men, calm in the intensity of their agony, betokened that, all hope had ceased. The sea rushed down upon us in such quantity—it was a perfect avalanche—as to induce me to believe the ship must be settling down, that the waters were not beneath and around us only, but *above us* also—closing in—and that, therefore our last hour had come. It was an awful moment. Many a time since then have I endeavoured to analyze my feeling at that instant, but in vain—save that *I do not think that, even then, HOPE—that sheet anchor of the soul—was entirely extinct.* I scanned the liquid column as it descended. It continued steadily to pour down with a sullen roar, and then as it reached the floor of the cabin it boiled and seethed as in a cauldron. The ship, stunned as it were, rolled heavily from side to side—it was a sickening motion!—she staggered like a

drunken man. And my thoughts? I thought of the ill-fated "President"\*—perhaps similarly destroyed;—of my past life; of the agonies of sudden death, now so imminent (and it has surprised me much to find that the dread of the *physical suffering* of dying was so intensely horrible)—and of many things besides, in less time than I have occupied in the recital. Oh, how long do we sometimes live within a few brief moments! Through what an immense amount of mental action may the brain be compressed to pass, by circumstances, within a given period! How rapidly will that organ sometimes, when extraordinarily quickened, perform its functions; thus enabling us to do, as it were, the thinking of a life within the compass of a day.

\*   \*   \*   \*   In itself a thought,  
A slumbering thought is capable of years,  
And curdles a long life into one hour.

How will it be hereafter? What a moment must that be to the condemned, in which, awaking to the consciousness that the soul is *lost*, they shall behold, as at a glance, the entire retrospect of a rebellious, godless, ill-spent life!

There were now some two and a half feet of water in the cabin. Splinters ground to saw dust were everywhere strewed upon the surface of the inundating brine; and whatever else could float did float in sad confusion. My first impulse (what parent is

\* And similar also has probably since been the fate of "The City of Glasgow."

there who, under such circumstances, would not first think of *them*,)—was to seek the rescue of my children. That was a moment of such anxiety as a parent only can conceive of, for some of them were missing. I knew that they were trampled under foot, like prostrate combatants in a melee, as the passengers rushed frantically by, some to ascend the staircase, others to go further aft. What cared they who had none of their own for other's children? *Mine* then first learnt the taste of ocean brine. "It was *very* salt," they told me afterwards. At the instant my wife and I both seized our youngest child, an infant of six months old, one by a leg the other by an arm, and we drew him purple, livid, all but suffocated from beneath the water, and the floating splinters. One minute more, my child, and thou must have been lost to me! In agony of mind I looked around for my other little ones, fully expecting that one of them in particular must have been drowned beneath the floating mattresses and pillows amongst which he was, as it were, imbedded only a short time before; but, thanks be to God! at length I found them all, and placed them for safety, upon a table, truly a forlorn group. The blood streamed profusely from an arm of Josepha, our eldest daughter, and besmeared us all—thus adding to the horrors of the dismal scene. I thought, such was the hemorrhage, that she could not live; but, on binding up the wound, to my great joy, the bleeding ceased.



My little party, in their night dresses, blood stained, shivering with cold and dripping from head to foot, stood terrified, huddled together upon the table in that dreary cabin, where we were left almost alone, the water reaching nearly to my wife's waist and mine, and yet *not one of these little ones spoke a word, nor shed a tear!* Terror, I imagine, had deprived them of the power of speech, and dried up the natural outlet of the pent-up grief. Soon finding that we had only shipped a tremendous sea, and were not sinking, I looked around for a resting place, and gathering the mattresses into a corner, I removed to them my wife and children. There, wrapping their trembling forms in the saturated blankets, WE SAT US DOWN TO DIE.

I thought it probable that our last hour was near; for, although for the moment spared, I well knew that, with a broken deck and our bulwarks and upper cabin swept away, if we shipped another such a sea, the ship must inevitably founder. I felt that it was indeed an awful thing to die thus suddenly, whilst in the enjoyment of health and strength; and could have wished, had it been God's will, to have been permitted to expire upon my bed, surrounded by the comforts of home, and soothed and strengthened by the prayers and presence of brother ministers and pious friends. But here upon the raging sea, not one escaping to tell our friends of how, and where it happened. Oh, none can conceive, I think, who

have not had a similar experience, of the bitter anguish consequent upon the latter consideration, more especially, of that hour.

At length I ascended to the deck. The scene was indeed most awful:—it was terrifically sublime! Clustering around the mizen mast there stood a group of about fifty persons from whose breasts all hope had fled. I trembled for their safety well knowing the danger of their position. Another such a sea must have inevitably swept off all who stood there—men, women, and infant children, into a watery grave, even should they, being almost naked—particularly one venerable man whose gray hair floated in the wind as he stood the centre of that band of despairing ones—escape perishing of cold. The sea, though running high, was streaked with foam, and its surface comparatively *smooth* through the intense violence of the wind, (the sea-going will understand this,) and covered with fragments of the wreck; but the drowning had disappeared. It was folly to linger there; I felt that if we were to die, it was better to take my chance below as the ship went down, than have my sufferings prolonged by being tossed about upon the raging sea without the shadow of a hope. Descending therefore I entreated several to come and share our *couch*, which was now comfortable-looking in the comparison; but I called in vain. One cast towards us a silent glance, or two, of anguish and despair:



A moment o'er his face  
A tablet of unutterable thoughts  
Was traced.

Fearing that the deck might break down still more, and enclose my little party without hope of egress, we betook ourselves to a state room which had been vacated by its former tenants when the sea broke over us. It was now occupied by a gang of the most hardened creatures it has perhaps ever been my lot to meet. I feel compelled to state that, if it be possible to analyze my feelings during the remainder of that day, and of the awful night which followed it, I was more afflicted by the wicked conduct of *man* than by the just judgments of God. *Then* I began to feel how deeply the calamity had been *deserved*. Then, for the first time in a life of *some* small experience and acquaintance with human nature in its various phases, did I become practically informed of the real character, the enormous wickedness, the fearful depravity of the human heart. I DO BELIEVE that the natural heart of man is indeed "*desperately wicked*." I witnessed during the few short hours of my stay in that apartment more hideous exhibitions of recklessness and profanity than it has ever been my lot to witness elsewhere in a given space of time. Let me say it however, for the credit of our Protestant religion, that the wretched beings with whom I spent that day and night were not of *us*. I could not but feel the miserable deficiency of

the Romish system as regards provision for a last hour. There was no Priest there to shrive them; no man who dared pretend to administer a *viaticum*; none to afford the false consolations of a deceptive system; and *therefore* it appeared as though all hope were gone; as though there were no Saviour, and no God, to whom to appeal for succour; and nothing to look forward to but the blackness of darkness for ever and ever. I write these words, as in the sight of God, who will judge me at the last day, and knowing, therefore, my accountability to him for the truthfulness of what I say: and with a full sense of my responsibility would I here record the deliberate conviction of my mind that Popery is no panacæa for a last hour; and that it is a system fraught with the most fearful danger to the soul. So long as the Sacerdotal officer can be summoned, and the delusion thus kept up, that *his* presence, and *his* acts, can, of themselves, afford a substantial hope to the departing soul, there may be an *appearance* of calmness and tranquillity in the prospect of death—fort he dying *will* snatch at shadows, and clutch convulsively at straws—but, let the *Man* be out of the way when Death is near, and then, he who has never been taught to go directly for aid to the MEDIATOR between God and man, but always to interpose a secondary object between the soul and the Saviour, will begin to feel that his *prop* has failed him, and that he has not whither he may turn: hopelessness ensues, therefore;

we may speak of faith in Christ; but *that* is not the Papists' gospel; the sound seems *heretical* even to his dying ears; and that is more than enough. He rejects the invitation—preferring rather to die “*a good Catholic*,” than to have his ears polluted by a voice from those whom he has been taught to consider as without the pale: and having no “Priest” at hand, and no “Confession,” and no “last unction,” his soul is beclouded with gloomy doubts and apprehensions, if he do not indeed recklessly give himself up for LOST.

These were my convictions at the time; and they have become stronger since. Whilst in that room, the most horrid oaths and blasphemies at each instant met my ear—whilst, had one been present, these swearers would no doubt have been bowing down at the feet of the Priest of Rome, to receive his absolution! Seldom they prayed—and when they did, it was to Saints and Angels, or to the Virgin whom they blasphemously styled *the mother of God*; and as they prayed, their oaths were intermixed. Not once was Jesus named. I begged them to invoke his name. I entreated them to go with me, in our extremity, to the throne of Him who alone hears and answers prayer; but they would not. I prayed with and for them; and as though to declare that they would rather depart this life with despair in their hearts, and obscenity upon their tongues, than join with a “heretic” Minister in seeking the Divine

mercy, they strove to drown my prayers by talking, and still swore on ! The recklessness of unsanctified despair was now the fruits of a hollow system of deception ;—it had sunk down upon their souls ; and they thought and spake of hell.\* So we spent that sad long night, the sorrows of which engraven upon my heart as with a pen of steel, have blanched and thinned the hairs upon my brow. We endured a living death. The place was a Pandemonium ; and we could remain there no longer. To the visitation of our Heavenly Father we could be reconciled ; but the conduct of these impious men it was impossible to bear. On the next day therefore we set about clearing up another state-room which also had been deserted, like all the rest, and removed to it in order that we might be alone.

\* In addition to profanity of the most fearful kind, we had to bear with gross unkindness too. Low Irish Romanist soldiers, men and women, had appropriated to themselves the state-room floor. My wife in vain entreated them for room to stretch her limbs, or for a dry place where she might be. All night she sat literally in a pool of water with her babe in arms ! as the infant could not be nursed in a contracted berth. Beneath me my child Josepha slept. In my arms lay a dear one whose innocent prattle distressed me beyond endurance, by the side of a common sailor—beside me sat a colored waiter praying in great distress ; I strove to comfort and instruct him—whilst within hearing another poured out his soul to God in agonized fervent supplications—exchanged at last for cries of joy for deliverance from the fear of death.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE CHRISTMAS.

How long, O Lord, how long  
Wilt thou withhold thy face,  
How long shall we in vain  
Implore thy promised grace ?  
Send down thy Spirit from above,  
And save us by redeeming love,  
Vain is the help of man :—  
Thine arm alone can save  
Or from the second death  
Or from a watery grave.  
This day thy promised child is given  
The “mighty God” of earth and heaven,  
Oh ! send His light to bless and save ;  
Or cheer our pathway to the grave.

THE day succeeding that of our disaster was Sunday, and Christmas also, but to us no “merry” one. The after part of the lower cabin afforded the greatest protection from the water, which with every sea flooded us in torrents through the opening in the deck. Thither we accordingly repaired. We formed a motley group : one to excite a smile, but so precarious was our condition, none thought of smiling there. In vain should I attempt to describe that scene. Ladies, children, servants, coarse camp-women, military officers, civilians, all were crowded together, male and female, in sad confusion ; and yet

notwithstanding, the utmost delicacy prevailed. Fortunately dry blankets were not scarce; for, in many cases, they were our only bedding;—the mattresses having, for the most part, become so thoroughly saturated as to be unfit for use. Here lay a wounded officer\* sadly crippled by the fragment of the wreck: there was another† trembling, as in an ague fit, from the effects of exposure to the cold whilst almost naked, as he sprang out of bed. And by his side a civilian,‡ benumbed and prostrate, having been five hours upon the deck after the saloon was washed away. In another direction I saw Major Merchant who, rushing aft, had fallen through the open hatchway, and barely escaped with life; whilst near him lay two others|| both sadly bruised and broken down, who had been washed overboard, and after enduring all the agonies of drowning, had almost miraculously succeeded in regaining the wreck. The “companion” railings were smashed in pieces; the deck had been “shored up,” but so unstable were the supports, it was constantly necessary to warn passers by to “keep hands off.” The ghastly mutilated corpses of those killed when the saloon was swept—one of which could previously be seen from below—had been committed to the deep, and the deck was made as tight as circumstances admitted of. But with all that could be

\* Col. Burke.

† Dr. Satterlie.

‡ W. J. Lorimer Graham.

|| Messrs. Rankin and Southworth.



done, the water collected as in a reservoir by the sinking of the deck, continued to pour down whenever we shipped a sea, sometimes flooding the cabin a foot in depth. Had the steam pump failed, the ship could scarcely have been kept "free."

Some would have received with us their first Communion on this sad Christmas day. It is not right to defer to such a time and place the joining of a Christian church. It is the duty of all men to be baptized and to commune at the table of the Lord, because Christ has so commanded it. He instituted the two sacraments for the benefit of his own blood-bought people; and we may not therefore needlessly put off their reception on pain of disobedience. It is no apology to say we are not fit, which is tantamount to saying we are not fit to die. *Christ* is our righteousness; and therefore our fitness. Our great concern is simply to believe, and in consequence to obey.

The day proved fine however, and all hands were set to work to lighten ship. Vast quantities of provisions were hoisted up through the cabin floor and thrown overboard. What would we not have given afterwards for never so small a portion! The confusion consequently necessary upon these proceedings prevented our engaging in the religious exercises at first proposed; and the next day it was tempest and storm again.

At home there were blithe faces and happy hearts

on that, to us, dreary Christmas Day. Little thought our friends perhaps, of our desolate condition. But they were praying for us, in the beautiful language of our Church—for travellers by land and sea—for the distressed in mind, body, and estate. And who can tell but that their prayers saved us?\* We know that the effectual and fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much—for God is revealed in his word as the hearer and the answerer of prayer. Well may we adopt the language of the Psalmist, and exclaim : *In my distress I called upon the Lord and cried unto my God : he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.*

We had more than once a literal exemplification of this truth. On the first night after we were wrecked, whilst engaged in fervent prayer that God would spare our lives and cause the storm to cease, the tempest calmed away and all was still : and on the second night towards the dawn of day precisely the same thing occurred. At the solicitation of several friends I agreed to spend part of Sunday night with them. It was indeed, like its predecessor, a night of horror—somewhat to me, it is true, alleviated by escape from the wretched den in which we had spent the one before. The winds howled fear-

\* I would here observe, that for one of our party, since gone to his reward, "*the prayers of distant friends,*" were on that night pleaded at the throne of grace. *Do they repent hem of those prayers now ?*



fully; the ship rolled heavily from side to side like some huge monster in the death agony; and we were apprehensive, as the sea swept over us, each moment might prove our last. Then and there did Christ reveal himself to our souls—a Saviour—truly Immanuel, God with us. In that once magnificent saloon, the splendid appointments of which, all wet, broken, torn and stained, seemed sadly to mock our miseries, were heard above the howling of the wind, clear, calm, soft, beautiful, mellifluous, the tones of woman's voice hymning the praises of the Eternal. These sounds—oh they were sweet indeed! I shall never listen to music more-soothing to my spirit, until these ears shall hearken to the strains of harps touched by angels, seraphs, and ransomed saints before the throne of God. We read the scriptures, and they seemed precious words; and we prayed aloud—not the Minister alone, but many, and we found it good to pray, for God heard our prayers. It seemed as though we could not grow weary of waiting at the throne of grace; and then, as the gray light of dawn broke in above, with one consent, at the suggestion of my wife\* we raised the song of praise. The night had passed; our prayers were heard by a prayer-hearing God; the tempest lulled; our lives were still preserved; and we felt at peace.

\* See! said she—pointing to the skylight above—the day is dawning: let us sing the morning Hymn.

When wave on wave to heaven upreared  
 Defied the pilot's art ;  
 When terror in each face appear'd,  
 And sorrow in each heart ;

To thee I raised my humble prayer,  
 To snatch me from the grave :  
 I found thine ear not slow to hear,  
 Nor short thine arm to save.

Thou gav'st the word, the winds did cease,  
 The storms obey'd thy will,  
 The raging sea was hush'd in peace,  
 And every wave was still.

One striking incident I feel constrained to place on record here. It is to my mind an admirable illustration of the value of forms of prayer, and especially of the Liturgy of our own Protestant Episcopal church, in times of danger and distress. During the awful night to which I have last alluded—a night spent in prayer—in *social* prayer—our supplications were not, as might be thought, exclusively *extempore*. The beautiful appropriateness of the *Litany* occurred to me, whilst leading the devotions of my fellow sufferers: as with deep solemnity of heart I prayed, on my own and their behalf:—

*O God the Father, of Heaven ; have mercy upon us miserable sinners !*

*O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us miserable sinners !*

*O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Fa-*

*ther and the Son : have mercy upon us miserable sinners !*

Each clause being followed by an audible response, I felt convinced that a chord was struck which vibrated to the inmost heart of each one of that all but despairing band ;—and then again we implored,

*Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our fore-fathers ; neither take thou vengeance of our sins : spare us, good Lord, spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever !*

The deep, heart-felt pathos with which was uttered the response,

*Spare us good Lord !*

must be imagined, not described : and finally when I said,

IN ALL TIME OF OUR TRIBULATION ; in all time of our prosperity ; IN THE HOUR OF DEATH, and in the day of judgment—the response,

GOOD LORD DELIVER US !

spontaneously broke forth, as the voice of one man, from every lip, and was, I doubt not, the fervent supplication of every heart.

*That* was no time for formalism, nor for hypocrisy. We prayed because we felt the *need* of prayer, and that we were dealing solemnly with our God. None dared to trifle at such a time. If ever men can be sincere, it is when confronting Death. In the prospect of dissolution, false hopes inspire not confidence

—neither will the departing soul be content with merely formal supplications. The experience, not only of this occasion, but subsequently on board the “*Kilby*”—to say nothing of that of a whole life—has told me that a Christian man, may in prayer to God, use forms without formalism; I will further add that it may be vouchsafed to him to bless God that his lot was cast within the pale of a church which provides for her children models of prayer so admirably adapted to every circumstance and condition of life, and especially to the scenes of sore trial and affliction. I would glory in my privilege of being permitted to approach the throne of grace—the unpremeditated language of the heart fresh upon the lips, or that language mingled, if my soul desire it, with the hallowed words which have been handed down to us for use in our extremity by martyrs and confessors. And, God willing, no man shall ever dictate to me what kind of prayer—whether extempore, or forms—I shall breathe forth in that trying moment when my soul shall in reality come to pass through the solemn agonies of a dying hour.

Would, then, that those who uncharitably denounce the use of forms of prayer had been with us on board the *San Francisco*! methinks they would have been content to allow us the exercise of our Christian liberty in this matter. *We* seek to interfere with no man’s conscience, and deny not that the unpremeditated supplication of the truly

penitent is acceptable in the sight of God : and thus we too would pray, *when more conducive to edification*. But why should we be faulted or denounced if we also think that Jehovah will hearken none the less to the petitions of his people, because preferred in the very words uttered ages ago, and handed down to us, their children, by our martyred forefathers ?

Of all our sufferings, there occurred about this time, perhaps, the most distressing instance. In order to exclude the sea-water, every aperture had been closely battened down during the night. But the remedying of one evil, proved the cause of another, scarce less great. The steam generated in working the pump, which had proved so valuable, having no place to escape, entirely filled the cabin, converting its whole area into, as it were, an immense vapour bath-room. This awoke me some hours before dawn. Half suffocated in my bed, I arose, gasping for breath. Every where I sought in vain for air. From head to foot burst forth the perspiration at every pore. At length it occurred to me that air might be inhaled at the crevices surrounding the "bull's eyes" through which oozed the bubbling brine. I endeavoured to draw an inspiration, but alas ! my hopes were doomed to disappointment. As well might the wretched prisoner look for mercy, at the hands of an inquisitor ! For several hours we wandered about in this misery, like disturbed spirits,

seeking rest, but finding none. At length, all but totally exhausted, the morning dawned; the battens were removed, and oh delight! once more we were permitted to breathe the free air of heaven.

Prior to my departure a splendid quarto Bible and Common Prayer book had been presented to me by the Church of the Ascension at New York. These I had hoped to have used on the establishment of our first Missionary Church in the benighted continent of South America. Deposited with other valuable gifts of books, word was brought to me that the case had first been broken open with a hatchet, and then thrown overboard *to lighten ship!* The valuable piano in the cabin narrowly escaped sharing at the time a similar fate.

Thus hours, and days, and nights, wore on—our prospects becoming gloomier and more gloomy with the lapse of time. Our hopes of rescue grew faint and fainter still; for the *Napoleon* had left us to our fate, and the *Maria Freeman* had come and gone. At this stage of our affairs I was summoned to attend a distressed woman in the forward cabin. A soldier came to conduct me to where she lay. We passed through what had been an amply furnished store-room, but where now all was in sad confusion. The water, ankle-deep, was dashed, as the ship rolled, from side to side, whilst here and there were groups of soldiers and sailors each seizing whatever could be had to eat. Some were even



clamorous for *raw meat*, as, such was the violence of the sea, no cooking could be done in the galleys. It appeared to me that these people having lost all hope, were resolved to give themselves over to sensual indulgence so long as life might last. Reaching the forward cabin, I found it crowded with soldiers, whose oaths and imprecations, wantonly uttered, without cause or meaning, gave me some idea of what a place *hell* must be. In vain did I entreat them to refrain;—in vain did I remind them that the next sea which struck the ship might send us all before our God. “*They knew ’twas wrong—but they could not help it*”—was their reply; “*it was a habit, but they meant no harm.*” And yet, I urged, for the indulgence of such a “*habit*” you are willing to peril your immortal souls! Unhappy soldier! more exposed, by virtue of thy profession, to the peril of sudden death than other men, thou art, perhaps, of all classes of men, the least prepared to meet it. Swearers cannot inherit the kingdom of God; and yet commanding officers will set their men the bad example of indulging in this disgraceful vice, even as it were, at the cannon’s mouth. If those whom, by courtesy, we are bound to regard as *gentlemen*, will pollute their lips with oaths, can we wonder that the private soldier should follow so contaminating an example?

At length I stood by the bedside of the afflicted woman. I was in a contracted passage way, not

more than some twenty inches wide, on either side of which were tiers of berths, three or four in depth, and these so narrow that the occupant could barely turn from side to side; and yet, notwithstanding, here lay this woman with one little child at the head and two more at the foot of her wretched sleeping place! The air was fetid, confined, unwholesome; the storm raged with fury; the ship pitched and rolled, whilst the coarse, profane language of the soldiery in the room adjoining added to the horrors of the scene. What wonder that the poor woman had at length lost heart? "*She had borne up as long as possible,*" she said, "*unwilling to despair, but now she had lost all hope; she thought that we must die, and felt that she was unprepared. Once was she a christian woman, but she had lost her first love; she had long forgotten God, and engaged in the service of sin and Satan. If spared, she trusted that she would go and sin no more.*" If spared, I add, may God grant her grace to remember these solemn words, uttered in the presence of the minister of Christ, during that awful midnight hour! A young man also told a similar tale. He too had been once religious, but had gone backwards, lightly esteeming the God of his salvation; I exhorted them to repent; and strove to administer the balm of comfort. We engaged in prayer to the God of heaven—And oh, we all felt, I trust, at that trying moment the value of religion. The fate of



that young man, and of that distressed mother is unknown to me : but if they live, I trust they have not forgotten that night and its resolves, its tears and prayers.

On my return from this scene of wretchedness, one met and said to me, *I suppose, sir, it is all right with you?* I knew his meaning; and it was a searching question which it well behoved me,—Minister though I was—to put seriously to my own heart. Aye! where is the man who at such a time would dare to say that it was “*all right*” with him? Apart from the cleansing blood of Jesus, all is not “*right*,” but wrong—but, thanks be to God! the believer—although in himself unworthy, is complete in Christ: whose righteousness is imputed unto him. We take refuge, then, under the shadow of *his* wings. There is danger lest being professionally employed in preaching the gospel unto others, the ministers of Christ should themselves become castaways. Paul felt this; and therefore well may we. Oh, let my brethren beware of that flattery which would whisper that *because* they minister in sacred things, it is of necessity, “*all right*” with them. Religion is a practical, individual, experimental thing. Conventionalisms will not avail in the matter of the soul. Leaving my interlocutor after a few words more, I turned away with the secret fear that however it might be with *me*, all was not “*right*” with *him*. May those who read these

pages profit by the deeply suggestive lesson which may be learnt from a personal application of these words!

My boots were filled with water, and became at length so painful to me to wear that after two days and nights I cut them off my feet. They were immediately stolen from me: and during the five days we remained on board the wreck, pillage and spoliation were the order of the day. Articles of jewelry, were continually purloined by those who were in momentary expectation of a watery grave! What need we more to convince us of the desperate depravity of the human heart?

We suffered much even at this time for want of water wherewith to quench our thirst. And this with twenty thousand gallons in the tanks beneath the cabin floor! The pump had been placed in the ships fore-deck, and after the bulwarks were carried away it was only accessible at the risk of life. Rumor reached us that men were lost in the endeavour to reach the pump. In vain proved an attempt to come at the tank. Thus were we tantalized—suffering of thirst with more than abundance beneath our feet! But God was seeking to discipline our hearts into submission to his sovereign will.

During the first gale—of the *thirteen* through which, said Colonel Gates, we passed—our brave mate, Mellus, had in vain endeavoured to cut away the only remaining mast, in order to ease the ship.

The foremast had already gone over the side; and so stormy was the night, we knew it not. An effort was now made to bend a sail, in hope that through its means the steamer might more steadily ride out the gale. The attempt succeeded; but it cost a life. Life preservers were thrown overboard in vain:—the poor sailor, dashed into the sea whilst engaged in the performance of this duty, struggled manfully with the waves, each of which however separated him only farther and still farther from us. At length exhausted, in sight of his more fortunate comrades, he sank to rise no more.

So passed the time. Our days were spent in sorrow and our nights in tears. At length deliverance was at hand.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE TRANS-SHIPMENT.

ON Tuesday afternoon, the Barque “Kilby” of Boston, Capt. Lowe, out 48 days from New Orleans, hove in sight. The sea was running high, and the weather hazy, so that our prospect of relief was small; but something whispered that we should yet be safe. Our flag was seen; the ship approached; the captain spoke us, and promised to remain till morn. *That night she disappeared.* But this time, by the

mercy of God, we were not to be disappointed. In the morning she discovered us again; and great was our joy to see her approach within speaking distance, and make preparations to send a boat on board, for we alas! had none. All had been swept away at one fell swoop. One needs to have experienced them to be enabled to appreciate the alternations of hope and fear which are the lot of shipwrecked men at such a time. Gratitude to God for the prospect of deliverance, was, I think it may be truly said, the all-pervading sentiment in every heart. The preparations for our transfer to the *Kilby* were carried forward with the least possible delay; although time elapsed, in consequence of one of the boats needing to be repaired. The disembarcation commenced about one o'clock P. M., and such a process may I never be called upon to behold again. The prospect of escape inspired all with courage; and thus it was that some, whom under ordinary circumstances nothing would have tempted to have ventured upon the steamer's unprotected deck, now calmly stood there without the least sign of fear. For greater security life lines were run along where *bulwarks* once had been. All were calm; and I think all were happy then: yet it was a fearful sight to see that disembarcation. In a solemn act of prayer we commended our bodies and souls to God; then took we, so to speak, our lives in our hands, and by dark 105 individuals, men, women and children, were placed in

comparative safety, on board the barque. I had the good fortune to be of that number: and thus ended my connection with the short-lived San Francisco. As we left her, it was impossible to avoid admiring the beautiful line of her battered hull, as thus she lay, pitching and rolling, a helpless wreck, upon the bosom of the waters. It was the opinion of a dear friend, now no more,\* who with me left in the last boat which carried passengers that day, that she could not possibly be taken into port. The captain did well to scuttle her, that she might not be the cause of wrecking others.

Encircling the stern of the steamer there fortunately remained a portion of the bulwark, thus affording protection to the passengers. Here then we were congregated; our noble Captain and his first officer, having rigged an apparatus consisting simply of the "bight" of a rope, with, in the case of the ladies, an extra one passing around the waist, assumed the duty of lowering us by this means into the boats below. The operation was most carefully performed. Seated on the rope, and holding our hands above our heads, we were thrown off, and hung in some instances, for several minutes dangling in the air, a tremendous sea heaving and surging beneath us; for, although the wind had slackened, the "ground swell" was great. The ship lurched continually from side to side, so much so as to render visible

\* Mr. G. W. Aspinwall.

part of her very keel. Often were the boats in danger of being crushed as they came under the "quarter;" and nothing but the utmost activity, combined with the most extraordinary caution, prevented such a catastrophe:—indeed, at night fall, our best boat was swamped, and there only remained two small and indifferently good boats in which to effect the transfer of five hundred souls!

The children were let down in blankets. For a parent's eyes it was a fearful sight to see his little ones swinging to and fro, swayed by the wind, and gradually approaching the surface of that splashing and foaming sea. The descent would vary, as the ship rolled more or less, from twenty to thirty feet: now was my child almost within my reach, now almost gone! Sometimes would the boat recede, tossed by a mountain wave, as we were about to grasp the descending one who would momentarily disappear from sight; now were we lifted up on high, and then again we fell into the dark abyss. But, thanks be to God! this dangerous and exciting transfer was at length accomplished without the loss of a single life.

A few words here as to the order of disembarkation. It was resolved by, I see not what authority, that *military rank* should determine the order of precedence in leaving the wrecked ship. The civilians were not consulted in this matter, at least I for one was not: although on board as the acting Chaplain of the San Francisco by and with the knowledge



and consent of the United States Government, the Commander-in-Chief Gen. Scott, Col. Gates, and his subordinate in command. And what will appear strange, I think, the rule of "rank" adopted, the parties left not in *inverted* order—that is, first those of the lower, and subsequently the officers of higher grade; but the commanding officer of the troops was the first who descended into the boat, so that, if this principle could have been carried out to its legitimate extent, the private soldiers would have disembarked alone. Not so did the brave Capt. Watkins who was the last man, after his officers, to quit his post. The LOT, not "rank," should have decided the question of precedence, and in this the great majority would no doubt have cheerfully acquiesced. *The right of the strong arm* was no right there. All stood upon an equal footing; for all had been alike shipwrecked in the Providence of Almighty God who sent the Kilby to our relief. The life of each man and woman and child was as dear to them as was the life of any other, to him or her. The poorest camp-follower, therefore, was, in justice, if so the lot determined it, as much entitled to the first opportunity of escape, as were those who, with arms in their hands, arrogated to themselves that right. The wives and children, both of the military and civilians—not of the former only, as was the case, should have departed first, and these by lot; and not an officer capable of doing duty should have left

the ship until the privates had disembarked, and then in the inverse ratio of their command.

The Kilby it was affirmed, had been chartered on behalf of the United States Government for fifteen thousand dollars, to convey the troops to the nearest port: and this agreement it was held, conferred a priority of right upon the military passengers. Sound doctrine this might have been whilst all were safe in the harbour of New York, and the option remained to us of embarking or not, such being the terms: but, shipwrecked upon the open sea, I know not by what rule of justice it can be affirmed that there exists a right to claim priority when the means of rescue are at hand, save only that which is determined by the lot. Nor does it appear less than a usurpation of the grossest kind to contract that the funds of the Republican Government of the United States—drawn as they are principally from the pocket of *civilians*, would be expended for the rescue of a particular class of citizens, whilst others, because they did not wear a sword, were virtually excluded from the privilege, so far as “military rank,” sufficed to operate towards their exclusion. In short, throughout the whole transaction, as I shall further show hereafter, the presence of the civilian passengers was officially and systematically—*ignored*. The civilians would have cheerfully borne their proportion of the expense; but we were not consulted, nor were we suffered to interfere. In fact, we were,



without the recognized enjoyment of the soldiers' privilege, placed, *nolens volens*, under the *de facto* operation of martial law ! Present we appeared to be regarded as though by *sufference* of our military masters ; although the obligation of paying passage money was not ignored. Hence it was that on our transfer from the Kilby to the Lucy Thompson, four citizen passengers,\* ladies two of them, rather than be subject longer to the indignities to which as civilians they had been exposed, preferred to remain on board : thus voluntarily choosing with the means of escape at hand, rather to run the risk of being again driven out, in a disabled ship, into the open sea. In justice, however, it is due to them to say that of our party there were many military men—both gentlemen and Christians—who, had *they* been consulted in the premises, would have indignantly repudiated the conduct of those their superiors who thus scrupled not to outrage courtesy, humanity, and right.

\* Señor Falcon, Brazilian Consul, Madame Bess, Señor and Madame Abrio, passengers for Rio de Janeiro.

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE KILBY.

The grey morn breaks along the murky sky,  
While we, all silently, in hopeless gloom,  
Amidst the sickening wait our call to die,  
Gathering our cherished ones to share our tomb.  
We *have* hoped on, untired, unceasing, on—  
Till hope seems mocking at our mighty grief;  
And one by one devoted friends have gone,  
Yet life nor death affords to us relief.  
Sail after sail floats by—our flag unseen;  
Starvation grimly stares us in the face.  
Sorrow and death familiar long have been:—  
Is that a sail? my tear-dimmed eye can trace?  
Methinks it is:—our God has heard our prayer!  
And will not leave his people to despair.

AND now we were on board the *Kilby*, all safe and sound, without mishap or accident. But we were frightened not a little at seeing Bella, my youngest daughter, almost fall in consequence of a sudden jerking of the rope by which the women and children were drawn up the ship's side. "*Pa, dont let the water come on me*" said the little darling, as she clung to my neck whilst I lay in my berth during that awful night after the accident to which I have already alluded, expecting the steamer to founder at each instant. To have beheld her now dashed

to pieces when we had almost reached the place of safety would have been sad indeed. But God preserved her, and spared us this extra sorrow. Often afterwards did our hearts thrill on hearing her simple but expressive narrative of the manner of her escape from on board "*that steamer*" as she emphasized it, to which she could not bear to think of "going back" again. "*They put me in a blanket,*" were her words, "*let me down in itte bote*" (a little boat) "*and I rided over and they took me up in a tub.*" Graphic description!—to my mind more eloquent in its simplicity, and more full of meaning, because unprompted, than the most measured expressions, or the most nicely rounded periods could possibly convey.

At length my turn came to clamber up the side ; and then I stood upon the deck. *That* was a happy moment!—one in which I can truly say my heart o'erflowed with thankfulness to God. Those who have not passed through a similar experience might almost envy us. How true is that word of the Psalmist, *heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning!* Instead of pitching and rolling at a fearful rate, as did the steamer, the good ship rode as quietly as though she were safely moored in the harbour of New York. And everything around appeared to be so substantial when contrasted with the light, airy, gossamer-looking "fixings" of the San Francisco. The bulwarks rising almost above

our heads, strong, stout, and comfortable-like, were very different from the slender studs, and fragile rope-work of the "hurricane deck"—short time, indeed, did it withstand the "hurricane!"—of our late prison house. There was an appearance of security about the barque which was most refreshing. But, oh ! how short-lived was our satisfaction. Small idea had we of the discomfort, the wretchedness which was still before us. Little thought we of the suffering which was yet to be endured. Well is it for man that the future is hidden from him. Inscrutable wisdom marks its concealment from his view. Could he uplift the veil, the prospect would oft be more than he could bear. Blessed Lord ! it is sufficient for us to know the circumstances, and to experience the joys and sufferings, of the passing hour.

It being now almost dark, one of my earliest acts, after the first burst of delight at finding ourselves in safety on board a ship which was not a wreck had passed away—it was truly good to be there !—was to look around for quarters for the night. But alas ! quarters there were none : at least for civilians such as we. Military superiority already constituted, or was made to constitute, a prior claim. The cabin comprised an area of some eight feet by ten ; and into this small space and the adjoining lockers, sur-named state-rooms, were crowded no less than three and thirty human beings. The berths were already

occupied by the senior commanding officers—such is military “rank”—with it may I never again be brought into such close collision!—whilst on the floor lay females and little children! Some would have thought *that* a time and place to have discarded etiquette and privilege, and to have let all share alike in turn; our *superiors* thought otherwise; and therefore *gallantry* and disinterestedness were, for the while, rather much forgotten. I suppose the world at large cannot agree as to the proper mode of sustaining the dignity of a profession.

I give vent to my feelings now; and so would others too, if called upon by circumstances so to do. And we *did* feel then, and deeply, the treatment to which we were exposed, for although affliction had bowed down our spirits it had not yet reduced us to the level of the brute. But, only then rescued from the jaws of death, it behoved us to bear all in silence—as we did—until submission ceased to be a virtue. The worm, when trodden upon, will turn. Not a complaint was heard, although, had we demanded the ejection of those *gentlemen* from the berths, to which they had no more “right” than we, and insisted upon our wives and children being placed therein, it was, perhaps, no more than was our duty to have done. But we were too thankful for deliverance then: too thankful to speak a word which might appear to express dissatisfaction in any one respect with our then position. And well we might

be so when we bethought us of the hundreds of our fellow sufferers still left on board the wreck. At length we breathed where the shrieks and cries of terrified and drowning persons, borne along in the deep darkness of the night as the wind howled fearfully and the storm lashed in fury around the devoted ship, no longer reached our ears. No longer did the seas rush over us with stunning force, causing brave men and strong to groan of very anguish, and pale, delicate, despairing women to quail of terror; and so none dared complain, although the annoyance of an assumed superiority was in truth hard to bear. And in other respects, bettered though it was by the transfer from the *San Francisco*, wretched indeed was our condition; for soon we found that not only were beds a thing to be had by few—and these of the *elite* whose money had not been lost, and who could consequently afford to *bribe*—but that water and provisions were also very scarce, and the ship's sails had been many of them blown away. Nevertheless, there were still some sails left; and the hull, and deck, and spars were sound: and good, sailor-like Captain Lowe spake to us cheering words.

Finding that the cabin was already quite overcrowded, I resolved to spend the night on deck. No sooner were we comparatively safe than the missionary whose prayers were offered during the howling of the storm, who had led the devotions of the wretched band through many a sad hopeless hour, might have perished upon that deck, for courtesy and kind-



ness other than to a chosen, select few, appeared to have been forgotten. Viewed in this aspect, how contemptible is man ! We *use* our fellows whilst we stand in need ; and then discard them as though nothing worth ! Such is the scene too often witnessed in this selfish, callous, griping and grasping world.

Looking about me in the gloom, I espied a valued friend who appeared to have taken up *his* quarters for the night in a position somewhat sheltered by the overhanging bulwark. He was seated upon the "softest part" of a huge spar. That man had served his country ; his head was whitened by the suns of 60 years, and *here* I found him, whilst boys in the comparison, because of some temporary military "rank," I presume, were allowed to occupy the cabin as his superiors ! I seated myself by his side. We talked over our prospects, then mused in silence. The night soon grew piercing cold. The wind had again arisen ; and it began to storm. I was, therefore, unwillingly compelled to seek, uninvited, the shelter of the crowded cabin, upon the bare floor of which lay my poor wife and children. The night was spent in sleepless vigil. Covering had they none save the single blanket in which each was wrapped during the transfer from the wreck. Like Lear, we were taught a lesson then—to pity the distressed who, pining in want and wretchedness, oft surround, in cold winter nights, our happy dwellings.



Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,  
That bide the pelting of the pitiless storm,  
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,  
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you,  
From seasons such as these ?

For two whole days and nights it continued to blow a gale ; yet our good ship floated like a cork upon the waters. Our chief concern then was that we had been separated from the steamer in the storm, and could do nothing towards the rescue of those who were left on board. But soon our troubles began rapidly to increase. The *Kilby* had no provisions—if we except a barrel of biscuit, and some bags of Indian Corn—and was very short of water. Had we not brought them with us, she would even have been without the necessary candles for the binnacle. We had hoped to have gotten a sufficiency of supplies from the wreck ; but only succeeded in transferring a little bread, bacon, tea, and sugar, with some wine and spirits :—but what was it all amongst so many ? Then were we taught the lesson that only He who fed the multitude at Tiberias could feed us also ; that the same God who replenished the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil, could open the windows of heaven, and pour down water wherewith to replenish our slender stock. *That* was the time to try our faith, for indeed our distress was great. I was amongst the first—if not the first—who suggested that we should

all be put upon short allowance. Those who had no children no doubt thought their sufferings acute enough; but oh! they knew nothing of the anguish of the parent's heart who, when his child implored him to give it more water and more bread, of neither had more to give! Oft had I read of such things, but never did I experience them before. It sickens my inmost soul to think of them even now. May I never see the day, when I shall be unable to compassionate the parent whose children cry for bread!

Our manner of life on board the *Kilby* was described in the papers of the day. Occurrences transpired there over which I have wished to draw a veil; but some, and these not a few nor low in station, have thought it an injustice to society in me so to do. Whatever I may reveal, then, of *facts* degrading to human nature in connection with these scenes must be regarded more as drawn from me in deference to the opinion of friends to whose sentiments I feel bound to pay respect, than as the result of my own individual will. I should have preferred to have borne all in silence, with the prayer that God would overrule all for good, and give the selfish ones repentance and a better mind. Many a noble trait of character was during that time developed, whilst it would be but truth to say some things there were then transacted which it were better had never been.

One instance, in illustration, I may be permitted

to set down here. Four citizen passengers of whom mention has been already made, had secured a state-room on board the *Kilby*—by what means I know not. The husband of one of the ladies was taken ill. Not long, however, had they been on board, before dissatisfaction was expressed on the part of several of our military friends. “The ship,” said they, “was chartered by the government for the conveyance of the U. S. troops; and these civilians had, therefore, no right to take possession of the state-room occupied by them.” The usual rations were withheld, on no notice being taken of these remarks; murmurs became louder and more frequent; and at last, under threats of a violent ejection, the parties, both male and female, left the cabin, and took refuge in the hold. It was stated as a chief ground of complaint in this instance that, whilst these two gentleman were occupying a state-room, the ladies had to sleep on the cabin floor—but, *no sooner did they vacate, than a gentleman then holding a commission in the U. S. Army, took possession in their stead!* For sixteen days and *nights* whilst *men*, sound and strong, occupied the berths and beds, did my poor wife sit *babe in arms*, upon that bare cabin floor. In every person’s way she was; being the only now remaining civilian lady of the band. And for the same period of time did the crew and passengers, amongst the latter my four young children, endure the combined agonies

of hunger, thirst, cold, and weariness, with, in one case, painful disease superadded. For two and twenty days up to the time of our arrival in New York, we could *wash* but twice—once with snow—and never laid aside our clothes. All were wretched, miserable, forlorn; “cast down” we were, but, thanks be to God! not “destroyed.”

I had fortunately secured some preserved milk whilst on board the Steamer; and but for this, I think, our babe—only eight months old—must have surely died. It was the only *treasure* I brought away with me from the wreck. With a cannister full in each pocket of my overcoat as I was swung off from the stern, I felt rich indeed. And mark the Providence of God. Being one day in the store-room of the *San Francisco* a soldier came to inquire for some “preserved milk.” Before, I knew not of the existence of such an article: and this led to my being provided, by him who feedeth the young ravens, for my little babe at the critical time when the fountain of his wonted nourishment had suddenly dried up, like Elijah’s brook. Let men call such things “accidents” “and chances” if they will—for my part I prefer to think them “Providences;” and to say the least, it is not only a harmless, but a comforting thought. If deluded in this matter, let it be allowed me to prefer the existence of my delusion to its dissipation by means of the superior wisdom and much vaunted science of this world. To *me* it is inexpress-

sibly sweet to be thus "deluded." To wiser heads, and nobler hearts, and abler pens, I leave the task of disproving the existence of an all-wise, overruling, and superintending Providence. God has been good to me in more ways than one; and in like manner has his Providential care of me been manifested notwithstanding my unworthiness. Twice within a year have I, in all probability, escaped the yellow fever through the disappointment of cherished hopes. And the very circumstances which led to my being now in the ministry of the gospel of my blessed Saviour were circumstances of a nature most painfully distressing. Had it depended upon the exercise of human foresight, wisdom or desire, it would not now have been my privilege—one which I value above all others—to preach to dying sinners the unsearchable riches of Christ. Why, then, should I not believe in the Providential oversight, in human affairs, of Almighty God? Is there not comfort in the thought that he who careth for the sparrows, and counteth the hairs of our heads, and spieth out all our ways, is continually watching over us for good?

Surrounded by thy power I stand,  
On every side I find thy hand :  
O skill for human reach too high !  
Too dazzling bright for mortal eye !

The starvation process had fairly now commenced. With each returning day rations were distributed

to all. I trust we learnt henceforth to call nothing of God's bounty common or unclean. Five days provisions were made to last for upwards of sixteen; but so exhausted was our stock that when we left the "Kilby" for the "Lucy Thomson" there only remained on board of biscuit about a quarter of a barrel, saved expressly for the women and children. A piece of bacon about the size of a fifty cent piece was the daily allowance for each adult, whilst the children were restricted to a still smaller portion. The following incident will illustrate our position at this time. One morning on going forward to the galley I there found a serjeant busily engaged in cutting bacon into small pieces, preparatory to their being cooked for distribution. The temptation was too great to be resisted by a hungry man. I asked for my "piece," and *ate it raw*. Word was immediately forwarded to the cabin—and thus it was repeated, *viva voce*, from mouth to mouth—"Mr. Cooper has had his piece!" most effectually preventing my obtaining a second "share," for that day, had I been even so inclined. Thus we watched each other. "Self-preservation" was indeed with us "the first law of nature." I feel bound to say that, on the whole, the most strict impartiality was practised in the distribution of the supplies.

I know not whether our sufferings were greater from hunger or from thirst. Frequently we were in dread lest the water in particular, should fail us



altogether. Great was our horror to hear one morning that from one of the best water casks there had been lost by leaking overnight more than a foot in depth. But God sent us rain. This we collected in casks—and thence transferred it to the water hogsheds for future use. On the first occasion was held a solemn conclave; the medical officers were consulted, and the water collected, so brackish, indeed, that I could scarcely taste it, after being submitted to their examination, was pronounced “good.” It was set aside for tea—but *few of us*, I trow, *would like to drink such water now*.

On one occasion the rain fell copiously, so that we had a general holiday. Word was passed around the ship, that all might approach the open casks, and drink as much as they pleased, *but carry none away*: a prohibition next to useless for the simple reason that *pockets* are not made for carrying *water* in; and of vessels of any kind there was most distressing lack. I had previously half filled a saucepan with meal which it had cost me half a day to grind just before the coffee mill got broken; and now, thought I, is there an admirable chance for water with which, and my hard got meal, to make a “mess.” I placed my saucepan under the spout through which we caught the precious liquid, and was rejoicing in my success, when in stepped a veteran military officer with a black bottle in hand, and which held by him *sans-ceremonie* immediately at



the orifice left *me* only the *dribblings* for my share ! Thus laudably engaged—a Major of the Army and a Presbyterian of the Church, we were both addressed by the officers of the guard, who, observing our employment, threatened to put a stop to our performance by placing a sentry “over *that* water”—a threat which was forthwith carried into execution. Hard times we thought—and so, no doubt, will think my reader—when the very rain from heaven had to be denied us: but well we knew that, under such circumstances, the denial was most just.

Hunger and thirst, then,—cold and weariness, was our lot. Soon we had to fall back upon the Indian corn, of which, providentially, there were five hundred sacks on board. But for this we should no doubt have been reduced to the fearful alternative, common in such cases, of subsisting upon the bodies of the—*destroyed* ! The anticipation of such a thing was terrible, so much so indeed, that I found it difficult to realize at times our situation. What ! was there even danger of its being *my* lot to undergo the tremendous ordeal of which I had often read as the fate of others ? Should *my* hand ever draw the lot which was to decide what victim should be sacrificed to sustain the lives of the survivors ? And was my *own* life also in danger of being placed in such desperate jeopardy ? Sickening thought !—too dreadful, even at this distance of time, to be

calmly endured. However, in his mercy, God spared us *this* affliction : but oh ! it seemed *very* near.

Every returning day beheld us growing thinner and thinner—weaker, and more weak. As a natural consequence of such a state of things, disease now began to creep in amongst our ranks. All were more or less indisposed, but happily none died. Another week, and *some* must in all probability have made their graves in the deep blue sea. And my little children—it may seem partial, selfish, or invidious in me to speak especially of them ; but still I cannot help it : let my reader pardon the fondness of a parent's heart—and if he or she have children of their own, I know I shall be pardoned, too. Well then, those who had no little ones to care for of that sad company no doubt thought their sufferings severe, and so they were ; but they could not be compared to mine : for what will not a father do and feel when his children cry for bread. Oh ! had those who have never known what it is to want been with us, and seen my little ones, as, day after day, they sat around me upon that cabin floor, a forlorn group, half clad, having ill rested over night, and each with distended eye and open mouth waiting to drink in turn the “sup” of tea and to eat the small piece of bread, varied now and then with a handful of the parched Indian corn—of which with difficulty they could be persuaded to partake until hunger drove them to it at last—had those in whose vocabulary that word

*hunger* is unknown, beheld it written legibly upon the countenances of those beloved ones who—I will say it for them—not once forgot that little brother and sister must also “share,” it would, methinks, have been to them a lesson of gratitude to God for the plainest food, which they could not forget to the latest hour of their lives. And little Warburton—the babe alluded to above, called by his sister “Warby”—he, too, was hungry! even *his* craving could scarce be satisfied. I have seen him stretch forth his tiny hands to seize the scrap of pork, or biscuit crumb, and devour them with a gusto such as infants, methought, had never felt before. My wife became almost intimate with another lady in consequence of a bond of union which would now perhaps excite a smile. Both had infants at the breast: but *we* had some preserved milk, whilst our friend had none. A barter system was established between the parties. One would contribute the powdered milk, whilst the other gave either the water or the bread. This, thrown together into a small cup, formed common and very precious stock, of which both infants shared. So time passed on.

Cramped for room in the cabin, I resolved to betake myself to the ship’s hold where some kind friends promised that quarters should be prepared for myself and two of our children. In other words a space was allotted to us where we might lie down upon the cotton bales—very hard they were, and

the thick ropes proved wearisome to the flesh. But by breaking open a bale now and then, we provided ourselves with *pillows*, and a partial covering, of the soft cotton, for which we were very thankful. Here we were more comfortable, having at least *turning* room. For only one night, which was very stormy, were the hatches battened down; and then the atmosphere was suffocating indeed. The ship's cargo being cotton, no light was allowed below, as *there was not a lantern on board*. At nightfall we began to seek our beds, to reach which it was necessary to crawl over the bodies of the soldiers who lay at our feet. How long did those dreary winter nights appear! Anxiously have I watched for the first streaks of light upon the hatchway ladder—and “wished for the day.” As time wore on, we became more and more scarce of food. It was pitiful to hear the cries of the little children. It seems as though I can hear them now. Often would mine awake at night, when all was storm and darkness, and entreat me “if possible” give them “*a little drink of water from the bottle*,” or, “*a small piece*” of the sweet, hard bread. It was my practice to reserve a little biscuit in my waistcoat pocket for occasions of emergency.\* Breaking off a portion, about as large as a twenty five cent piece, I would

\* “*Pa*”—would Cranmer say—“*if you have got any more of that biscuit I would like to have it—if not, it doesn't matter.*”

place it in the mouth of the little beggar, enjoin him to eat it slowly that he might not crave too soon again : and then calm and satisfied, he would drop asleep. Sometimes they would ask for meat, when I had none to give. Sweet was a morsel then ! My older children would ask conditionally—" *if you can spare it*" they would say—and learnt to bear repulse ; but little Bella found it difficult to understand why it should be so. "*Is Sophy in the water, Pa?*" she would sometimes say, alluding to a sister whom we had left behind in Massachusetts. These were amongst the greatest sufferings we endured.

But no ! once we were tried more acutely still. One stormy night, or morning rather—for it was past the "witching hour," as my wife and I sat sad and wakeful in the cabin, the steward presented himself at the door with a cup of water in his hand which was passed to Mrs. Cooper (who sat, babe in arms upon the floor as she did for sixteen successive nights), in order that she might transmit it to a lady who occupied much more comfortable quarters in an adjoining state-room. Famishing of thirst, she was about to raise the cup of water to her lips, when a lady interposed. That water was designed for another she was told and could on no account be touched. In vain pleaded my poor wife for but *a tea spoonful* wherewith to wet her fevered lips—and in vain did the little babe plead silently. Not one drop was she allowed to taste ; the cup was passed on to Mrs.

——— untasted by her upon whom, under God, depended at that very moment for nourishment that innocent, helpless child. May God give grace to that selfish one to repent her of so unfeminine an act!

We had one fine day on board the Kilby, and all resolved to take advantage of it. Accordingly there was a general muster upon deck, where it was proposed to hold a kind of thanksgiving service, but the idea was overruled. For that day we enjoyed the sun of heaven. Anxiously did we scan the horizon with the glass: and all hearts were elated at the report of a sail in sight. A large ship soon became distinctly visible sailing across our bows. All sail was made; true our "all" was not much to boast of, for the storms had rent them one by one from the fastenings; the stars and stripes were hoisted, and every effort put into requisition, in order to attract the attention of the passing ship; but, 'twas all in vain. She manifested not the slightest disposition to approach us, although the wind was fair, and we were near enough to have perceived her answering signal, had she made one, with the naked eye. Good Capt. Lowe, determined to make every effort, at length lowered a boat and rowed some six miles in the direction of the passing ship, which took no notice of him nevertheless; and as it was approaching night-fall, with sorrowful hearts we beheld him return to us without success. Cold must indeed have been



the bosom of the captain of that ship! For aught he knew, or cared, we might have been in a foundering condition. What a contrast was here to the noble Creighton! who for five days and nights risked his own life, and those of all on board his ship, to save his fellow beings in distress. Well is it that the world is not composed of men who have no hearts.

Again we went below to quarter for the night. Despondency was the predominant feeling, in consequence of the disappointment experienced because of the passing ship. Since early morn had we watched her progress, and now had night's sable curtain hidden her from our view. And it contributed not a little to the gloominess of my own feelings to find that whilst on deck my bed place had been rifled of a *treasure*. Beneath the loose cotton which served me for a pillow I had hidden a bottle containing a *reserve* of cold tea, which was sparingly used, on occasion, to quench the thirst of my little ones. *That night they suffered thirst.* There was no "sup" to give them; for alas! the bottle was entirely empty. No money could have purchased it at such a time. I cared not for myself: I would have shared drop for drop with a fellow *man*, but it was cruel thus to leave me without any for the little children. *I could chew tea or Indian corn to prevent thirst, but they would not be satisfied with less than water.*



But painful as it is to record such selfish acts, we were not without instances of the noblest self-sacrifice and self-disinterestedness ; and here will I bear my testimony, in this respect, on behalf of the foreign civilians of whom I have already spoken as having been in so unwarrantable a manner ejected from the cabin, that others might take their place. Aliens were they, both in respect of country and religion, but God had given them tender hearts. And whilst I live shall I remember with gratitude the kindness of *Madame Bess* and *Senhor Falcon* in particular. *They* cared for my little ones, during many an hour when duty required my presence elsewhere. May the good Lord reward them an hundredfold into their own bosom !

Conversing one day with the friend of whom I have already made mention, he unbosomed to me, with a pathos such as I have seldom witnessed, the sorrow which had been caused him on detecting himself in a selfish act. An emergency had arisen, and the temptation was too great for him. He sank before it, and the result was self-reproach, and shame. A blush suffused his cheek as he related the sad story. The man of noble mind, and high Christian character, had for once been betrayed into the commission of a deed which he felt ashamed to own, and at which his whole soul would have revolted at another time. “ *Oh ! is it possible, my God ;*” was his exclamation, “ *that I have come to this ?*” To such

straits will extremity reduce sometimes even the noblest minds! I loved him as he related to me the story of the conflict between the spirit and the flesh: and then I felt that I could with safety trust my very life in the hands of such a man:—of such well may it be written on his tombstone, *He lived not for himself.*

My tale is a melancholy one indeed:—it will not, perhaps, much interest the gay and thoughtless, who prefer the romance of fiction, to the sober, or heart-breaking, realities of life—but nevertheless we may infuse some lights into this gloomy picture of want and woe. And blessed be God! the light of which I would now speak was *light from on high.* May the good Lord make me ever thankful that it is my privilege thus to write! Throughout these scenes of wretchedness we knew what comfort was; but, it was not the comfort of *the creature.* Our consolation was derived from another source than the things of earth. We knew the value of religion. *Experimentally* we then felt its force,—its power to soothe and to console. When no other source of hope was near, we learnt to put our trust in God. Daily were we enabled to commune with him in prayer. The waves might roar; famine might do its worst; the succouring ship might not appear, and death, in all its horror, might stare us in the face, until we became accustomed to look upon him with less of dread than heretofore; but still we

knew that God was near, and not only near, but ready and willing to hear the cry, and listen to the supplications, of his believing children. Now in the cabin, now in the darkened hold, and elsewhere throughout the ship—sometimes at dead of night—would we commune with him. Every day were we permitted to celebrate the public worship of Almighty God—to pour out our hearts before him, and offer the due sacrifice of praise. His hand of power we knew upheld us; the light of our Father's countenance did shine upon us amid the gloom. Well may infidels and sceptics envy the position of the believing Christian when thus engaged in the exercise of delightful communion with his God!

On the first night of my residence in the hold I was solicited to lead in prayer. The soldiers were many of them profane: but soon a marked reformation was begun. Their oaths, at first horribly frequent, became gradually less and less. Even the females whom we had brought off from the wreck, sought at first to interrupt our worship by whispering and noise; but they, too, soon learned to respect others, if they did not respect themselves. "*That's what is giving us the foul wind,*" screamed one, as she heard my voice uplifted, during the darkness, in supplication to Almighty God! Awful impiety it was, especially in one only just rescued from a watery grave. In the morning I solemnly addressed her and her companions; I spake of the influence

which every woman ought to exercise in the promotion of religion, and of the service rendered by those who surrounded his cross to our blessed Lord; and from that time forth we were interrupted no more. Small honor is it for the church of Rome, that her children should act thus at such a time. Better be a "heretic"—if so it must be—than a scoffing disciple of a church which leaves her people in ignorance such as was here betrayed.

The soldier should never be sent abroad without the minister of God. Has he not a soul? And if the state demand his services, his time, his strength, his life, when need requires, ought she not to make provision for his spiritual as well as for his bodily wants? He is not a brute, a *thing*, fit only to be sabred or shot down: and his place filled with some one else to be destroyed in turn. He must live forever in a world which shall know no end; and if his country demanded that he shall die, when need requires, in her defence, her duty is to see that he is not denied all needful requisites for the benefit of his immortal soul. Seven hundred souls sent forth upon a voyage of several months without a regimental chaplain is a transaction which ought not to be.

Bad as he in many cases is, there is hope for the soldier yet, if only due measures be taken for the supply of his spiritual wants. Disorderly and profane they were at first, but, before I left the ship,

few congregations are more attentive to common prayer than the privates on board the *Kilby* had learnt to be.

Once I preached in that ship's hold. It was on a Sunday afternoon. Attentive and respectful in demeanor had those rude soldiers of my audience then become. Many of them professed another creed than mine. Oh that the bread thus cast upon the *waters* may be found after many days! Poor *Captain Field*! I conversed with him during the last night of his mortal life, for he was swept overboard with his companions in the saloon;—a “Common Prayer Book,” the only memento left of him, was found, as we were leaving her, on the deck of the *San Francisco*; it had been presented to him by his wife, and many a time did we find it useful in directing our supplications at the throne of grace. As we offered its truly scriptural prayers, the language of that ritual, so deeply consonant to our wants and feelings, became then to us doubly dear. Many a tongue then joined in audible response to the petitions of that book which had perhaps never, so joined before. The prayers, “*Thy will be done on earth*” and “*Give us this day our daily bread*,” were offered, too, I doubt not, in all sincerity, by suppliant who, till then, it may be, had but regarded the prayer of our Lord too much as a *form* alone.

And the Bible? We found one on board, wet

and broken,—it was a gift of her father to a young lady then with us. This was to us invaluable. Gold, what was it worth in the comparison? nothing. Had it not been for that blessed book we should have been deprived of consolation such as I cannot express. Day and night we read in it, words of comfort and encouragement. Let me be deprived of what I may—one thing do I earnestly desire of my heavenly Father—that I may never be without the means of access to the written word of God.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE “LUCY THOMSON.”

The Kilby's cheerless deck  
We have deserted now ;  
And half in sorrow, half in play,  
The waves dash o'er her prow.  
Our God has saved us once again,  
When death stood near, and hope was vain.

I MUST now hasten on, for this narrative is already long enough. After seeing many ships, none of which approached sufficiently near to enable us to communicate with them—after seeing the light of the searching steamer *Alabama*, without its being in our power to answer them for want of cannon, or even a lantern, wherewith to signalize her, for it was night,—when all, starving, and for the most part diseased,



had grown well nigh desperate, and the crew had mutinied, requiring the captain to "beach" the ship on the nearest shore, it pleased God to send the *Lucy Thomson* to our relief. And here again would I record with gratitude that in the hour of our greatest mental depression—I mean the night before this our second and final rescue, we obtained relief in prayer. It has become a trite expression that the deepest gloom of night is that which immediately precedes the dawn. So was it, mentally, with us. The wind had been strong and fair; and all day had we sailed along direct for port. The captain, however, dared not venture too near the coast during the night, and consequently we had to stand off and on. On the next morning the wind still was fair, but the fog had become so thick that we could not see two ships-length ahead; and so we passed the day. As the second night approached, the fog cleared away; but fearful of accident, it was found necessary again to stand out to sea whilst almost within reach of port. Then—in that bitter hour—was every head mournfully bowed down with grief and disappointment—then did each heart experience in all its wretchedness, the faint sickness of "hope deferred." I cannot describe our feelings during that trying night. Hunger, thirst, and weariness we had long endured—and now, when all had expected to have been stepping on shore, the thought of standing off to sea was horrible in the extreme. We knew that the next



change would probably bring the wind ahead, and send us back perhaps, to the Gulf Stream. Then, for an instant, the first time during three long weeks of agony, the faith of him who indites these pages began to fail; and he felt as though *death* were preferable to further misery. *Prayer* was the source whence, for himself and others, he was in that bitter hour permitted to draw consolation. The balm of comfort was shed abroad in his soul, as by an angel's hand; and the bitterness soon passed away like a hideous dream. That night, as stated above, the seamen mutinied. They would have forced the ship on shore at the risk of all our lives. God overruled them; and by the light of dawn, deliverance was at hand.

Again would I call attention to the marked providence of God. Captain Pendleton of the *Lucy Thomson*—from whose lips I received this statement—when about to retire to rest at six o'clock on the previous evening, desired the watch to awake him at the hour of ten. He could not sleep, however, until about eight o'clock. When called, therefore, he was very drowsy, and inadvertently countermanded his previous order to stand in to land at ten o'clock. The ship consequently, still continued to head out to sea, and so encountered us at early dawn. A few moments later and she would have changed her course and lost us.

Again we descended into the boats; but this time

they were more numerous, and the operation was less perilous. The sea, however, was very rough—not less so than on the day we left the *San Francisco*. I will not speak of the dread with which I beheld two of my little ones—I could not look upon them all—again about to be passed from ship to ship. They were handed over the side to a sailor who, holding a child in one hand, sustained himself with the other, whilst the sea rolled and the boat tossed to and fro beneath him. I will only add that the day on which, chilled and wet, having with great difficulty clambered up the side, I found myself in the splendid cabin of that fine ship, was, with but one exception, if I can except even that—the day of my ordination—the happiest of my life. Treated in the most princely manner by the noble-hearted captain and his officers—one of whom vacated his state-room for my wife, the spirits of us all revived. Thanks were given to God for this second rescue; and on Saturday evening, a steam tug came down to us to Sandy Hook. For the *third* time were we transferred from ship to ship; and at last, by God's mercy, although in far different plight from that in which three weeks before we left it—having in that time lived an age—we were all safely landed upon Whitehall Quay in the “Empire City” of New York.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE MORAL AND CONCLUSION.

Once again, thou glorious ocean,  
We can view thy wave of foam,  
Fearing not thy restless motion,  
Or thy wrath, thou mighty ocean,  
In our happy home.

I HAVE well nigh told my tale ; and may the Lord bless it to the reader's soul ! By the good hand of our God upon us we had at length reached the land ! and thanks to the kind-hearted generous people of New York we were enabled to exchange our military *brogans* and coats, and *ragged blankets* for comfortable clothes.\* Speaking of blankets—even the oriental blanket *Turbans* were laid aside, in deference to that universal custom amongst Anglo-Saxons and their descendants which demands the use of stove-pipe hats. It was no longer necessary for me to act as *washerman*, or, at the least, if I felt inclined to continue to practice in that line, *soap* was not inaccessible ; and *fresh* water could be had in place of salt. Soon also did we learn to set less value upon old sugar bowls, and broken pots and pans, although

\* Of all our gifts that was the dearest which was handed in as “ \$5 of children's pin-money ” for clothes for my own little ones.

it was somewhat difficult at first to get accustomed to the convenient appendages of our dinner table at New York. And my sick child Josepha—she from under whose head as she lay upon the floor of the *Lucy Thomson's* cabin, covered with measles, a Christian lady sought to remove the very pillow, for the benefit of some adult relative—now lay upon a comfortable couch, although her life remained for some time in imminent danger, in consequence of the cold and exposure to which she had been subjected. And my little boy, who was stowed away beneath the cabin table, with a bundle for his pillow and the hard floor his bed, whilst stout *men* occupied the beds in the adjoining state-rooms—he too—now sick of the disease which others had brought on board with them—was where he could be well attended, and comfortably cared for. So that we had much, indeed, for which to be truly thankful.

And he whose melancholly task it has been to write the tale of suffering, was not without comfort from the thought that he had been enabled, in some degree, to perform his duty. With feelings of devout gratitude to God did I listen to the statement of two of my fellow passengers: and my thankfulness was none the less because they were only privates of the army. “*Mr. Cooper,*” said one of them, unexpectedly addressing me, when on board the *Lucy Thomson*, “*I am only a rough soldier fellow, and you may think me bad enough; but many a time have I list-*

ened to your prayers with comfort and satisfaction.’’  
“ *Your prayers saved us, sir,*” said another—a poor soldier from Germany—“ *and if it were possible, I would at once retire from the army, and lead a different life—for I am sick of the wickedness of my companions.*” This repaid me amply for all that I had endured. To be the blessed means of comforting, or, with the Spirit’s aid, awakening but one sin-sick soul was reward enough ; and here were two. Well wrote the wise man : *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand ; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that.\** Oh ! let us not despise or neglect opportunities of doing good, but whensoever and wheresoever occasion is presented for labouring in the Master’s cause, let us unhesitatingly go forward in the path of duty, and leave results to *him*, whilst patiently looking for His blessing who has promised that a cup of cold water given in His name shall in no wise lose its reward.

It was unanimously agreed amongst the passengers whilst still on board the *Kilby*, that, if it should please God to bring us safely to land, we would, on the first suitable opportunity thereafter, celebrate our deliverance by a solemn public act of thanksgiving and praise. It was late, however, on Saturday night before we landed in New York ; and consequently

\* Ecc. xi. 6.

to have carried out this resolution on the following day would have been impracticable—several of the party being ill, and others, if not all, in want of clothes. This was the reason also why only a fraction of our number attended the services at Grace Church, Brooklyn, which were premature, and the notice of which I did not receive until they were nearly over. It grieved me much, and others also, to have been thus disappointed of a long-cherished hope. Glad I should have been to have joined in any special service at such a time, had I received timely notice. Some felt, however, that it was not too much to think that it more properly belonged to him whose privilege it was to lead the devotions of that company in the hour of danger, and to share those dangers, to lead them also in Sacramental Thanksgiving, in the moment of their joy. Great, was, nevertheless the comfort I experienced in being permitted to receive, on the Sunday morn which followed the night of our disembarcation, the precious memorials of my Saviour's dying love, at the hands of the kind-hearted venerable Bishop of New York. Although prostrated in body, and in extreme lassitude of mind, the delight I experienced on that Sabbath day whilst participating in the religious services of St. John's Church, and of St. George's in the afternoon, will not be erased from my memory to the latest hour of my life.

Through how many dangers, hardships and diffi-



culties had God in his mercy safely brought us—whilst a third part of our number had perished upon the sea! Oh had we not—and *have* we not cause to be thankful? And ought we not in the beautiful language of our ritual *to show forth our gratitude not only with our lips, but in our lives?* May the good Lord grant us grace to spend the remainder of our days to His honour and glory.

Let us not ask *why was this affliction permitted to befall us*—but rather, *why were we spared?* Inscrutable are the counsels of God, and his ways past finding out. One thing we know :—INFINITE WISDOM characterizes the government of the ALMIGHTY. MAN cannot by searching find out GOD, nor can he comprehend the motives which animate JEHOVAH. The perfection of his moral character is beyond dispute : perfection in the Diety is essential to his existence. Certain is it, also, that God is *merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.\** That he could *prevent* evil, sin, and misery, is indubitable : but that it consists not with the perfection of his moral government and with man's accountability so to do may safely be affirmed. It behoves us not, then, in a cavilling spirit to inquire why does the Creator permit evil to exist; but, what is the use which He designs that we should make of it? and

\* Exodus, xxxiv. 6.



how may we best testify our gratitude to him for deliverance from that evil ?

And were those who died in that raging sea, and those who perished subsequently of the pestilence, sinners above all other Galileans because they suffered such things ? Well may we adapt to our case the Saviour's reply to his own question :—*I tell you nay : but except we repent we shall all likewise perish.* God delights not in suffering ; but he will whet his sword and make it ready ; and when the wicked man fills up the measure of his iniquity, how often does he cut him down as a useless cumberer of the ground ! Fain would I trust that we suffered not in vain. God was leading us in mercy by a way which we knew not. He was teaching us how short sighted and insignificant are the purposes and plans of man :—how easily he can confound the devices and frustrate the schemes of the most far-sighted and calculating of his creatures. A more splendid ship than the *San Francisco* has perhaps seldom floated upon the water : in two days she was an unmanageable wreck, tossed hither and thither, at the mercy of the winds and waves. And we—the survivors of her passengers—were spared to be living monuments of God's grace—proofs of His boundless mercy. Verily there is a God that doeth righteously. *He* knows *why* he spared us : *we* know that it is our duty to glorify and honour him. Whilst our distant friends were permitted to rejoice in the tidings of our safety, how

mysterious is that dispensation under which, prompted by sad forebodings, a widowed parent addressed to New York the brief Telegraphic message—embodying, so to speak, the quintessence of her misery : *Is my SON amongst the lost?* Poor departed Stockwell ! *on earth* thy bereaved mother will never see thee more. Unshrouded art thou :—to thy memory let me shed the falling tear. May thy rest be peaceful in the bosom of that Saviour who died for thee ! Ardently no doubt, did thy heart beat with hope, and the hearts of others who, with thee, then met their death. And now they lie beneath the deep ! We shall see them no more until the Resurrection morn when the sea must give up its dead, and we shall stand before Christ's judgment seat. *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord : even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours.*

A word, in parting, for soldiers and sailors. I have seen somewhat of both, nor was this the first time that my life has been in danger upon the sea. But never before have I been brought into such close contiguity with military men. In these pages I have not hesitated to declare the truth ; although, perhaps, I may not have been able to present the military service in the most favourable point of view. That is no concern of mine. I have stated *facts*—although not *all* the facts. What I have related has been forced from me by a sense of duty : more I could have added, but let this suffice. I desire to

see the soldier's condition bettered. I hope to live to see the day when not only shall the English and the French, and the Russian soldier be provided with a Bible, and a chaplain to administer the consolations of religion; but when the knapsack of every American soldier shall also contain a copy of the Word of God; and when the minister of Christ shall be with every regiment, not by sufferance, as I was made to feel was my case; but, as a duly commissioned officer of the service. Why should the American soldier be treated as though he were a brute without a soul? Has he only to fight, and bleed, and die—then be forgotten? Has he not an interest in the precious gospel of Jesus? Why, then, should his country send him abroad and make not provision for his spiritual wants?

Experience has told me that the soldier's heart is not inaccessible to the tale of Jesus. Charity—real charity—has forbidden me to conceal the truth; and therefore have I spoken of the wickedness of many of my military companions on the sea. But do I, therefore, suppose that their wickedness was not owing rather to their associations, than to any especial preference on their parts for vice? Let commanding officers cease to swear; and let regular religious services be held amongst our troops, and with God's blessing we may hope to see reform amongst the soldiers of the camp.

And should this little book hereafter fall into the

hands of either sailor or soldier who with me passed through the fearful scenes, the remembrance of which it is intended to preserve, may I not hope that the labour which it has cost me to prepare it, under disadvantageous circumstances, has not been bestowed in vain? God has dealt mercifully with us, ought we not, then, to praise him by a life of holiness? The soldier's is a life of danger His existence is liable more especially to be placed in peril. Ought he not, then, to be of all others a man of holy conversation and godliness?

And to those whose occupation is on the sea and their paths in the great waters, let me add a word of friendly counsel and admonition. Follow not the multitude to do evil. We know that men die upon the land, as sailors do upon the sea; but we know also that the average life of sea-faring men is shorter than that of those who dwell on shore. It is in vain to say, therefore, that there is not more danger in the seaman's occupation. Hundreds are being swept into eternity every year, and we read in the book of God that *as it is appointed unto men once to die, so after death will be the judgment.* We must give account of the deeds done in the body. There is no escaping death—nor what comes after death. Let it be our care, then, to live so that whenever we may be summoned hence, suddenly or otherwise, we may not be afraid to die. Oh, let me entreat the reader to flee to the Cross of Christ—to

seek an interest in his precious blood. In prayer at the throne of grace let us ever seek the grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Let us entreat our heavenly Father to give unto us new hearts, and to make us his children by adoption and grace; that so, when called away from this vale of tears, we may receive the crown of life. Thus living, we need not fear; we may trust our lives and bodies to the care of a most merciful Saviour, who wills not that any should perish but that all should be converted and live;—and thus living, we shall best fulfil that Divine injunction which cannot be too deeply engraved upon our hearts,

PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.

## APPENDIX.

---

EXTRACT OF A LETTER WRITTEN TO REV. DR. JOHNS OF  
BALTIMORE, IN MARCH LAST.

“Talking of Washington (city) reminds me of the appropriation for the people of the San Francisco. Have you heard anything of it of late? I think that not only is it just to compensate the poor soldiers for what they lost, and to reward, most handsomely, for the sake of example, the captains and deserving men of the crews who rescued us, but also to vote a public—a national testimonial to Captain Watkins and Mr. Mellus, but for whose gallant conduct, under God, I strongly incline to think there would soon have been no San Francisco, nor passengers, for Captain Creighton, Lowe, nor any one else to have rescued. Never did two nobler fellows stand upon a ship’s quarter-deck. Never were men more faithful in the discharge of duty; more cool—nor more intrepid. In the time of the greatest danger neither the captain nor his mate were to be seen below. Once the report was that Captain Watkins was also lost; and when at length they did appear in the cabin, it was a certain indication to us that the storm had calmed, as they were spared from duty. Day and night did those men stand upon that ship’s deck—how, I know not—the sea making a clear breach over us, and occasionally sweeping people, as we often heard, into eternity. The moral effect of such determined bravery—for a brave man indeed he must be who could face continually such a sea as that—was greater upon us all than you can form the least idea of. Had Watkins quailed, I known not what must have been the consequences. On the battle field men display what we call courage—especially if well “*supported*” from the rear—but they have the prospect of escape—the hope that *they* may not be slain; and are nerved to the fight by the incitements to struggle with the foe: but *there*, on board that ship, there was little prospect of salvation—



faint indeed was the glimmer of the ray of hope: and our enemy a raging sea, a vast seething cauldron; who could contend with it in a broken and leaky ship? Well might the stoutest heart grow faint—but whatever these men *felt* they displayed it not, either in actions, looks, or words.

“Once in particular I remember, did Mr. Mellus do what should entitle him to the lasting gratitude of all the passengers, although I have not seen it alluded to by any. The sea was raging furiously, and the covering placed upon the cabin skylight had been blown off by the howling wind. As the sea was constantly breaking over us, it was feared that it would smash the glass, and deluge the passengers, (principally ladies and children) with water, as they lay upon the floor beneath. It became necessary, therefore, if possible, to secure the skylight. But who would venture to attempt it? The bulwarks gone, the sea raging, and the ship rolling fearfully, what man would risk his life to prevent us from getting wet? Mellus did it! I saw him stand, for at least half an hour, as it appeared to me, by that skylight, the sea beating over *him*, and terrifying *us* below, until at last, watching occasionally his opportunity—holding on by, *I know not what*, except his *feet*, he secured the covering and relieved our fears. Ought such conduct to go unrewarded? To stand as he did then, and face a boiling ocean, to secure our *comfort*, required, I think more courage than to win “a bubble reputation at the cannon’s mouth.”

“I have always thought that Captain Watkins has not been dealt with according to his merits. The passengers speak of him unanimously in terms of the highest praise. To his coolness, intrepidity, vigilance, and presence of mind—his wondrous self-possession in the time of danger, we owe, under God, in a great degree, our preservation. And yet, what has been done for him? A piece of plate, or two, so far as I know, is all that has been awarded him for his conduct, and to make up his losses—for he too, I presume, lost everything. When I left for the Kilby he was then, to my certain knowledge, soliciting volunteers to aid him in the endeavour to take the ship into port. Few men would have thought, at that time, of anything else than abandoning the wreck and saving life.”



L+x  
W

not so  
able

